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# HISTORY

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OF THE

## WAR OF THE INDEPENDENCE

OF

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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BY CHARLES BOTTA.

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VOL. I.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN,

BY GEORGE ALEXANDER OTIS, ESQ.

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SECOND EDITION, IN TWO VOLUMES, REVISED AND CORRECTED.

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BOSTON :

PUBLISHED BY HARRISON GRAY.

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William L. Lewis, Printer.

1826.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, to wit:

*District Clerk's Office.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the sixth day of March, A.D. 1826, in the fiftieth year of the Independence of the United States of America, GEORGE ALEXANDER OTIS, Esq. of the said district, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

'History of the War of the Independence of the United States of America. By Charles Botta. Vol. I. Translated from the Italian, by George Alexander Otis, Esq. Second edition, in two volumes, revised and corrected.'

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and also to an act entitled, 'An act supplementary to an act entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.

JNO. W. DAVIS,

*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

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PROVO, UTAH



## NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR.

There will be found, in the course of this history, several discourses of a certain length. Those I have put in the mouth of the different speakers have really been pronounced by them, and upon those very occasions which are treated of in the work. I should, however, mention that I have sometimes made a single orator say what has been said in substance by others of the same party. Sometimes, also, but rarely, using the liberty granted in all times to historians, I have ventured to add a small number of phrases, which appeared to me to coincide perfectly with the sense of the orator, and proper to enforce his opinion; this has happened especially in the two discourses pronounced before Congress, for and against independence, by Richard Henry Lee, and John Dickinson.

It will not escape attentive readers, that in some of these discourses are found predictions which time has accomplished. I affirm that these remarkable passages belong entirely to the authors cited. In order that these might not resemble those of the poets, always made after the fact, I have been so scrupulous as to translate them, word for word, from the original language.

## TRANSLATOR'S NOTICE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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The translator of this history, in laying before his fellow-citizens a second edition of it, would offer them his sincere acknowledgments for their favorable reception of the first; a reception the more gratifying, as, notwithstanding his own high value of the work, it surpassed his most sanguine expectations. It evidently appeared that Botta, like all his great predecessors in the march of immortality, was greeted with the most enthusiasm and admiration by those who were, doubtless, the most conscious of being his fellow-travellers on the road to posterity. How warmly was he welcomed by the surviving patriots who had distinguished themselves the most eminently in the great scenes he describes! The venerable John Adams, on receiving the second volume of the translation, expressed himself in the words following; 'I unite with many other gentlemen in the opinion that the work has great merit, has raised a monument to your name, and performed a valuable service to your country. If it should not have a rapid sale at first, it will be, in the language of book-sellers, good stock, and will be in demand as long as the American Revolution is an object of curiosity. It is indeed the most classical and methodical, the most particular and circumstantial, the most entertaining and interesting narration of the American War, that I have seen.' In like manner, the hand that penned the Declaration of American Independence, on receiving the first volume of the translation, having already for some years been possessed of the original, addressed the translator the words of encouragement which are here set down. 'I am glad to



find that the excellent history of Botta is at length translated. The merit of this work has been too long unknown with us. He has had the faculty of sifting the truth of facts from our own histories with great judgment, of suppressing details which do not make a part of the general history, and of enlivening the whole with the constant glow of his holy enthusiasm for the liberty and independence of nations. Neutral, as an historian should be, in the relation of facts, he is never neutral in his feelings, nor in the warm expression of them, on the triumphs and reverses of the conflicting parties, and of his honest sympathies with that engaged in the better cause. Another merit is in the accuracy of his narrative of those portions of the same war which passed in other quarters of the globe, and especially on the ocean. We must thank him, too, for having brought within the compass of three volumes every thing we wish to know of that war, and in a style so engaging, that we cannot lay the book down. He had been so kind as to send me a copy of his work, of which I shall manifest my acknowledgment by sending him your volumes, as they come out. My original being lent out, I have no means of collating it with the translation; but see no cause to doubt correctness.' On receipt of the second volume of the translation, Mr. Jefferson renews his eulogies of the history, in the expressions which follow; 'I join Mr. Adams, heartily, in good wishes for the success of your labors, and hope they will bring you both profit and fame. You have certainly rendered a good service to your country; and when the superiority of the work over every other on the same subject shall be more known, I think it will be the common manual of our Revolutionary History.' Mr. Madison is no less decisive in his approbation of the undertaking. He writes the translator on receiving his first volume;

‘The literary reputation of this author, with the philosophic spirit and classic taste allowed to this historical work, justly recommended the task in which you are engaged, of placing a translation of it before American readers; to whom the subject must always be deeply interesting, and who cannot but feel a curiosity to see the picture of it as presented to Europe by so able a hand. The author seems to have the merit of adding to his other qualifications much industry and care in his researches into the best sources of information, and it may readily be supposed that he did not fail to make the most of his access to those in France, not yet generally laid open?’ &c. Thus cotemporary witnesses, and the most prominent actors in some of the principal events recorded in these volumes, have authorised and sanctioned the unexpected indulgence with which they were received by the American people. Grateful for such high approbation, and content with having been the first to present his countrymen, at his own peril, with however imperfect a copy of so inimitable an original, the translator will always be happy to congratulate them on the appearance of a better.



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# HISTORY

OF

## THE AMERICAN WAR.



### BOOK FIRST.

AMERICA, and especially some parts of it, having been discovered by the genius and intrepidity of Italians, received, at various times, as into a place of asylum, the men whom political or religious disturbances had driven from their own countries in Europe. The security which these distant and desert regions presented to their minds, appeared to them preferable even to the endearments of country and of their natal air.

Here they exerted themselves with admirable industry and fortitude, according to the custom of those whom the fervor of opinion agitates and stimulates, in subduing the wild beasts, dispersing or destroying pernicious or importunate animals, repressing or subjecting the barbarous and savage nations that inhabited this New World, draining the marshes, controlling the course of rivers, clearing the forests, furrowing a virgin soil, and committing to its bosom new and unaccustomed seeds; and thus prepared themselves a climate less rude and hostile to human nature, more secure and more commodious habitations, more salubrious food, and a part of the conveniences and enjoyments proper to civilised life.

This multitude of emigrants, departing principally from England, in the time of the last Stuarts, landed in that part of North America which extends from the thirty-second to the forty-fifth degree of north latitude; and there founded the colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, which took the general name of New England. To these colonies were afterwards joined those of Virginia, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, the two Carolinas, and Georgia. Nor must it be understood, that in departing from the land in which they were born, to seek in foreign regions a better condition of life, they abandoned their country on terms of enmity, dissolving every tie of early attachment.



Far from this, besides the customs, the habits, the usages and manners of their common country, they took with them privileges, granted by the royal authority, whereby their laws were constituted upon the model of those of England, and more or less conformed to a free government, or to a more absolute system, according to the character or authority of the prince from whom they emanated. They were also modified by the influence which the people, by means of their organ, the parliament, were found to possess. For, it then being the epoch of those civil and religious dissensions which caused English blood to flow in torrents, the changes were extreme and rapid. Each province, each colony, had an elective assembly, which, under certain limitations, was invested with the authority of parliament; and a governor, who, representing the king to the eyes of the colonists, exercised also a certain portion of his power. To this was added the trial, which is called by jury, not only in criminal matters, but also in civil causes; an institution highly important, and corresponding entirely with the judicial system of England.

But, in point of religion, the colonists enjoyed even greater latitude than in their parent country itself: they had not preserved that ecclesiastical hierarchy, against which they had combated so strenuously, and which they did not cease to abhor, as the primary cause of the long and perilous expatriation to which they had been constrained to resort.

It can, therefore, excite no surprise, if this generation of men not only had their minds imbued with the principles that form the basis of the English constitution, but even if they aspired to a mode of government less rigid, and a liberty more entire; in a word, if they were inflamed with the fervor which is naturally kindled in the hearts of men by obstacles which oppose their religious and political opinions, and still increased by the privations and persecutions they have suffered on their account. And how should this ardor, this excitement of exasperated minds, have been appeased in the vast solitudes of America, where the amusements of Europe were unknown, where assiduity in manual toils must have hardened their bodies, and increased the asperity of their characters? If in England they had shown themselves averse to the prerogative of the crown, how, as to this, should their opinions have been changed in America, where scarcely a vestige was seen of the royal authority and splendor? where the same occupation being common to all, that of cultivating the earth, must have created in all the opinion and the love of a general equality? They had encountered exile, at the epoch when the war raged most fiercely in their native country, between the king and the people; at the epoch when the armed subjects contended for the right of resisting the will of the prince, when he usurps their liberty; and even, if the public good require it, of transferring the crown from one head to another. The colonists had supported these

principles ; and how should they have renounced them ? They who, out of the reach of royal authority, and, though still in the infancy of a scarcely yet organised society, enjoyed already, in their new country, a peaceful and happy life ? The laws observed, justice administered, the magistrates respected, offences rare or unknown ; persons, property and honor, protected from all violation ?

They believed it the unalienable right of every English subject, whether freeman or freeholder, not to give his property without his own consent ; that the house of commons only, as the representative of the English people, had the right to grant its money to the crown ; that taxes are free gifts of the people to those who govern ; and that princes are bound to exercise their authority, and employ the public treasure, for the sole benefit and use of the community. ‘These privileges,’ said the colonists, ‘we have brought with us ; distance, or change of climate, cannot have deprived us of English prerogatives ; we departed from the kingdom with the consent and under the guarantee of the sovereign authority ; the right not to contribute with our money without our own consent, has been solemnly recognised by the government in the charters it has granted to many of the colonies. It is for this purpose that assemblies or courts have been established in each colony, and that they have been invested with authority to investigate and superintend the employment of the public money.’ And how, in fact, should the colonists have relinquished such a right ; they who derived their subsistence from the American soil, not given or granted by others, but acquired and possessed by themselves ; which they had first occupied, and which their toils had rendered productive ? Every thing, on the contrary, in English America, tended to favor and develop civil liberty ; every thing appeared to lead towards national independence.

The Americans, for the most part, were not only Protestants, but Protestants against Protestantism itself, and sided with those who in England are called Dissenters ; for, besides, as Protestants, not acknowledging any authority in the affair of religion, whose decision, without other examination, is a rule of faith, claiming to be of themselves, by the light of natural reason alone, sufficient judges of religious dogmas, they had rejected the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and abolished even the names of its dignities ; they had, in short, divested themselves of all that deference which man, by his nature, has for the opinions of those who are constituted in eminent stations ; and whose dignities, wealth and magnificence, seem to command respect. The intellects of the Americans being therefore perfectly free upon this topic, they exercised the same liberty of thought upon other subjects unconnected with religion, and especially upon the affairs of government, which had been the habitual theme of their conversation, during their residence in the mother country. The colonies, more than any other country, abounded in lawyers, who, accustomed to

the most subtle and the most captious arguments, are commonly, in a country governed by an absolute prince, the most zealous advocates of his power, and in a free country the most ardent defenders of liberty. Thus had arisen, among the Americans, an almost universal familiarity with those sophistical discussions which appertain to the professions of theology and of law, the effect of which is often to generate obstinacy and presumption in the human mind ; accordingly, however long their disquisitions upon political and civil liberty, they never seemed to think they had sifted these matters sufficiently. The study of polite literature and the liberal arts having already made a remarkable progress in America, these discussions were adorned with the graces of a florid elocution ; the charms of eloquence fascinated and flattered on the one hand the defenders of bold opinions, as on the other, they imparted to their discourses greater attraction, and imprinted them more indelibly on the minds of their auditors.

The republican maxims became a common doctrine : and the memory of the Puritans, and of those who in the sanguinary contentions of England had supported the party of the people and perished for its cause, was immortalised. These were their apostles, these their martyrs : their names, their virtues, their achievements, their unhappy, but to the eyes of the colonists so honorable, death, formed the continual subject of the conversations of children with the authors of their days.

If, before the revolution, the portrait of the king was usually seen in every house, it was not rare to observe near it the images of those who, in the time of Charles I. sacrificed their lives in defence of what they termed English liberties. It is impossible to express with what exultation they had received the news of the victories of the republicans in England ; with what grief they heard of the restoration of the monarchy, in the person of Charles II. Thus their inclinations and principles were equally contrary to the government, and to the church, which prevailed in Great Britain. Though naturally reserved and circumspect, yet expressions frequently escaped them which manifested a violent hatred for the political and religious establishments of the mother country. Whoever courted popular favor, gratified both himself and his hearers, by inveighing against them ; the public hatred, on the contrary, was the portion of the feeble party of the hierarchists, and such as favored England. All things, particularly in New England, conspired to cherish the germs of these propensities and opinions. The colonists had few books ; but the greater part of those, which were in the hands of all, only treated of political affairs, or transmitted the history of the persecutions sustained by the Puritans, their ancestors. They found in these narratives, that, tormented in their ancient country on account of their political and religious opinions, their ancestors had taken the intrepid resolution of abandoning it, of traversing an immense ocean,



of flying to the most distant, the most inhospitable regions, in order to preserve the liberty of professing openly these cherished principles ; and that, to accomplish so generous a design, they had sacrificed all the accommodations and delights of the happy country where they had received birth and education. And what toils, what fatigues, what perils, had they not encountered, upon these unknown and savage shores ? All had opposed them ; their bodies had not been accustomed to the extremes of cold in winter, and of heat in summer, both intolerable in the climate of America ; the land chiefly covered with forests, and little of it habitable, the soil reluctant, the air pestilential ; an untimely death had carried off most of the first founders of the colony : those who had resisted the climate, and survived the famine, to secure their infant establishment, had been forced to combat the natives, a ferocious race, and become still more ferocious at seeing a foreign people, even whose existence they had never heard of, come to appropriate the country of which they had so long been the sole occupants and masters. The colonists, by their fortitude, and courage, had gradually surmounted all these obstacles ; which result, if on the one hand it secured them greater tranquillity, and improved their condition, on the other it gave them a better opinion of themselves, and inspired them with an elevation of sentiments, not often paralleled.

As the prosperous or adverse events which men have shared together, and the recollections which attend them, have a singular tendency to unite their minds, their affections and their sympathies ; the Americans were united not only by the ties which reciprocally attach individuals of the same nation, from the identity of language, of laws, of climate, and of customs, but also by those which result from a common participation in all the vicissitudes to which a people is liable. They offered to the world an image of those congregations of men, subject not only to the general laws of the society of which they are members, but also to particular statutes and regulations, to which they have voluntarily subscribed, and which usually produce, besides an uniformity of opinions, a common zeal and enthusiasm.

It should not be omitted, that even the composition of society in the English colonies, rendered the inhabitants averse to every species of superiority, and inclined them to liberty. Here was but one class of men ; the mediocrity of their condition tempted not the rich and the powerful of Europe, to visit their shores ; opulence, and hereditary honors, were unknown amongst them ; whence no vestige remained of feudal servitude. From these causes resulted a general opinion that all men are by nature equal ; and the inhabitants of America would have found it difficult to persuade themselves that they owed their lands and their civil rights to the munificence of princes. Few among them had heard mention of Magna Charta ; and those who were not ignorant of the history of that important



period of the English revolution, in which this compact was confirmed, considered it rather a solemn recognition, by the king of England, of the rights of the people, than any concession. As they referred to heaven the protection which had conducted them through so many perils, to a land, where at length they had found that repose which in their ancient country they had sought in vain ; and as they owed to its beneficence the harvests of their exuberant fields, the only and the genuine source of their riches ; so not from the concessions of the king of Great Britain, but from the bounty and infinite clemency of the King of the universe, did they derive every right ; these opinions, in the minds of a religious and thoughtful people, were likely to have deep and tenacious roots.

From the vast extent of the provinces occupied, and the abundance of vacant lands, every colonist was, or easily might have become, at the same time, a proprietor, farmer, and laborer.

Finding all his enjoyments in rural life, he saw spring up, grow, prosper, and arrive at maturity, under his own eyes, and often by the labor of his own hands, all things necessary to the life of man ; he felt himself free from all subjection, from all dependence ; and individual liberty is a powerful incentive to civil independence. Each might hunt, fowl and fish, at his pleasure, without fear of possible injury to others ; poachers were consequently unknown in America. Their parks and reservoirs were boundless forests, vast and numerous lakes, immense rivers, and a sea unrestricted, inexhaustable in fish of every species. As they lived dispersed in the country, mutual affection was increased between the members of the same family, and finding happiness in the domestic circle, they had no temptation to seek diversion in the resorts of idleness, where men too often contract the vices which terminate in dependence and habits of servility.

The greater part of the colonists, being proprietors and cultivators of land, lived continually upon their farms ; merchants, artificers, and mechanics, composed scarcely a fifth part of the total population. Cultivators of the earth depend only on Providence and their own industry, while the artisan, on the contrary, to render himself agreeable to the consumers, is obliged to pay a certain deference to their caprices. It resulted, from the great superiority of the first class, that the colonies abounded in men of independent minds, who, knowing no insurmountable obstacles but those presented by the very nature of things, could not fail to resent with animation, and oppose with indignant energy, every curb which human authority might attempt to impose.

The inhabitants of the colonies were exempt, and almost out of danger, from ministerial seductions, the seat of government being at such a distance, that far from having proved, they had never even heard of, its *secret baits*.

It was not therefore customary among them to corrupt, and be corrupted : the offices were few, and so little lucrative, that they were far from supplying the means of corruption to those who were invested with them.

The love of the sovereign, and their ancient country, which the first colonists might have retained in their new establishment, gradually diminished in the hearts of their descendants, as successive generations removed them further from their original stock ; and when the revolution commenced, of which we purpose to write the history, the inhabitants of the English colonies were, in general, but the third, fourth, and even the fifth generation from the original colonists, who had left England to establish themselves in the new regions of America. At such a distance, the affections of consanguinity became feeble, or extinct ; and the remembrance of their ancestors lived more in their memories, than in their hearts.

Commerce, which has power to unite and conciliate a sort of friendship between the inhabitants of the most distant countries, was not, in the early periods of the colonies, so active as to produce these effects between the inhabitants of England and America. The greater part of the colonists had heard nothing of Great Britain, excepting that it was a distant kingdom, from which their ancestors had been barbarously expelled, or hunted away, as they had been forced to take refuge in the deserts and forests of wild America, inhabited only by savage men, and prowling beasts, or venomous and horrible serpents.

The distance of government diminishes its force ; either because, in the absence of the splendor and magnificence of the throne, men yield obedience only to its power, unsupported by the influence of illusion and respect ; or, because the agents of authority in distant countries, exercising a larger discretion in the execution of the laws, inspire the people governed with greater hope of being able to escape their restraints.

What idea must we then form of the force which the British government could exercise in the new world, when it is considered, that the two countries being separated by an ocean three thousand miles in breadth, entire months sometimes transpired, between the date of an order, and its execution ?

Let it be added, also, that except in cases of war, standing armies, this powerful engine of coercion, were very feeble in England, and much more feeble still in America ; their existence even was contrary to law.

It follows, of necessity, that, as the means of constraint became almost illusory in the hands of the government, there must have arisen, and gradually increased, in the minds of the Americans, the hope, and with it the desire, to shake off the yoke of English superiority.

All these considerations apply, especially, to the condition of the eastern provinces of English America. As to the provinces of the south, the land being there more fertile, and the colonists consequently enjoying greater affluence, they could pretend to a more ample liberty, and discover less deference for opinions which differed from their own. Nor should it be imagined, that the happy fate they enjoyed, had enervated their minds, or impaired their courage. Living continually on their plantations, far from the luxury and seductions of cities, frugal and moderate in all their desires, it is certain, on the contrary, that the great abundance of things necessary to life rendered their bodies more vigorous, and their minds more impatient of all subjection.

In these provinces also, the slavery of the blacks, which was in use, seemed, however strange the assertion may appear, to have increased the love of liberty among the white population. Having continually before their eyes, the living picture of the miserable condition of man reduced to slavery, they could better appreciate the liberty they enjoyed. This liberty they considered not merely as a right, but as a franchise and privilege. As it is usual for men, when their own interests and passions are concerned, to judge partially and inconsiderately, the colonists supported impatiently the superiority of the British government. They considered its pretensions as tending to reduce them to a state little different from that of their own slaves; thus detesting, for themselves, what they found convenient to exercise upon others.

The inhabitants of the colonies, especially those of New England, enjoyed not only the shadow, but the substance itself, of the English constitution; for in this respect, little was wanting to their entire independence. They elected their own magistrates; they paid them; and decided all affairs relative to internal administration. The sole evidence of their dependence on the mother country, consisted in this: that they could not enact laws or statutes, contrary to the letter or spirit of the English laws; that the king had the prerogative to annul the deliberations of their assemblies; and that they were subject to such regulations and restrictions of commerce, as the parliament should judge necessary and conducive to the general good of the British empire. This dependence, however, was rather nominal than actual, for the king very rarely refused his sanction; and as to commercial restrictions, they knew how to elude them dexterously, by a contraband traffic.

The provincial assemblies were perfectly free, and more perhaps than the parliament of England itself; the ministers not being there, to diffuse corruption daily. The democratic ardor was under no restraint, or little less than none; for the governors who intervened, in the name of the king, had too little credit to control it, as they received their salaries, not from the crown, but from the province



itself; and in some, they were elected by the suffrages of the inhabitants. The religious zeal, or rather enthusiasm, which prevailed among the colonists, and chiefly among the inhabitants of New England, maintained the purity of their manners. Frugality, temperance, and chastity, were virtues peculiar to this people. There were no examples, among them, of wives devoted to luxury, husbands to debauch, and children to the haunts of pleasure. The ministers of a severe religion were respected and revered; for they gave themselves the example of the virtues they preached. Their time was divided between rural occupations, domestic parties, prayers, and thanksgivings, addressed to that God by whose bounty the seasons were made propitious, and the earth to smile on their labors with beauty and abundance, and who showered upon them so many blessings and so many treasures. If we add, further, that the inhabitants of New England, having surmounted the first obstacles, found themselves in a productive and healthful country, it will cease to astonish, that, in the course of a century, the population of the American colonies should have so increased, that from a few destitute families, thrown by misfortune upon this distant shore, should have sprung a great and powerful nation.

Another consideration presents itself here. The fathers of families, in America, were totally exempt from that anxiety, which in Europe torments them incessantly, concerning the subsistence and future establishment of their offspring. In the new world, the increase of families, however restricted their means, was not deemed a misfortune: on the contrary, it was not only for the father, but for all about him, that the birth of a son was a joyful event. In this immensity of uncultivated lands, the infant, when arrived at the age of labor, was assured of finding a resource for himself, and even the means of aiding his parents; thus, the more numerous were the children, the greater competence and ease were secured to the household.

It is therefore evident, that in America, the climate, the soil, the civil and religious institutions, even the interest of families, all concurred to people it with robust and virtuous fathers, with swarms of vigorous and spirited sons.

Industry, a spirit of enterprise, and an extreme love of gain, are characteristic qualities of those who are separated from other men, and can expect no support but from themselves; and the colonists being descended from a nation distinguished for its boldness and activity in the prosecution of traffic, it is easily conceived that the increase of commerce was in proportion to that of population. Positive facts confirm this assertion. In 1704, the sum total of the commercial exports of Great Britain, inclusive of the merchandise destined for her colonies, had been six millions five hundred and nine thousand pounds sterling; but from this year to 1772, these colonies had so increased in population and prosperity, that at this epoch



they of themselves imported from England to the value of six millions twenty-two thousand one hundred and thirty-two pounds sterling ; that is to say, that in the year 1772, the colonies alone furnished the mother country with a market for a quantity of merchandise almost equal to that which, sixty-eight years before, sufficed for her commerce with all parts of the world.

Such was the state of the English colonies in America, such the opinions and dispositions of those who inhabited them, about the middle of the eighteenth century. Powerful in numbers and in force, abounding in riches of every kind, already far advanced in the career of useful arts and of liberal studies, engaged in commerce with all parts of the globe, it was impossible that they should have remained ignorant of what they were capable, and that the progressive development of national pride should not have rendered the British yoke more intolerable.

But this tendency towards a new order of things did not as yet menace a general combustion ; and, without particular irritation, would still have kept within the bounds which had already so long sufficed to restrain it. During a century, the British government had prudently avoided to exasperate the minds of the colonists : with parental solicitude, it had protected and encouraged them, when in a state of infancy ; regulating, afterwards, by judicious laws, their commerce with the mother country and with foreign nations, it had conducted them to their present prosperous and flourishing condition. In effect, in times immediately following the foundation of the colonies, England, as a tender mother, who defends her own children, had lent them the succour of her troops and her ships, against the attacks of the savage tribes, and against the encroachments of other powers ; she granted immunities and privileges to Europeans who were disposed to establish themselves in these new countries ; she supplied her colonists, at the most moderate prices, with cloths, stuffs, linens, and all necessary instruments as well for their defence against enemies as for the exercise of useful professions in time of peace, and especially such as were required for clearing the lands, and the labors of agriculture. The English merchants also assisted them with their rich capitals, in order to enable them to engage in enterprises of great importance, such as the construction of ships, the draining of marshes, the diking of rivers, the cutting of forests, the establishing of new plantations, and other similar works.

In exchange for so many advantages, and rather as a necessary consequence of the act of navigation, than as a fiscal restriction, and peculiar to commerce, England only required the colonists to furnish her with the things she wanted, on condition of receiving in return those in which she abounded, and of which they had need. The Americans were therefore obliged to carry to the English all the commodities and productions which their lands abundantly supplied,

and, besides, the fleeces of their flocks for the use of her manufacturers. It was also prohibited the colonists to purchase the manufactures of any other part of the world except England, and to buy the productions of lands appertaining to any European people whatever, unless these productions had been first introduced into the English ports. Such had been the constant scope and object of a great number of acts of parliament, from 1660 down to 1764; in effect, establishing a real commercial monopoly, at the expense of the colonies, and in favor of England: at which, however, the colonists discovered no resentment; either because they received in compensation a real protection on the part of the government, and numerous advantages on that of individuals, or because they considered the weight of this dependence as an equivalent for the taxes and assessments to which the inhabitants of Great Britain were subjected, by laws emanating from parliament.

In all this space of time, parliamentary taxes formed no part of the colonial system of government. In truth, in all the laws relative to the colonies, the expressions sanctioned by usage in the preambles of financial statutes, to designate taxes or duties to be raised for the use of government, were studiously avoided, and those only of free gifts, of grants, and aids lent to the crown, were employed. The parliament, it is true, had frequently imposed export duties upon many articles of commerce in the colonies; but these were considered rather as restrictions of commerce, than as branches of public revenue. Thus, until the year 1764, the affair of taxation by authority of parliament, slept in silence. England contented herself with the exercise of her supremacy, in regulating the general interests of her colonies, and causing them to concur with those of all the British empire: The Americans submitted to this system, if not without some repugnance, at least with filial obedience.

It appears evident that, though they were not subjected to parliamentary taxes, they were not useless subjects to the state, since they contributed essentially, on the contrary, to the prosperity of the mother country.

It cannot be asserted, however, that ill humors were not agitated, at intervals, between the people of the two countries, by attempts on the one part to maintain and even extend the superiority, and on the other to advance towards independence. A year after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, (1749,) a grant was made, near the river Ohio, of six hundred thousand acres of excellent land, to some merchants, whose association was called the Ohio Company. The governor of Canada, at that time a province of France, having had intelligence of this establishment, was apprehensive the English had the intention of interrupting the commerce of the Canadians with the Indians, called *Tuiguis*, and of intercepting the direct communication between Canada and Louisiana. He therefore wrote to the governors of New

York and of Pennsylvania, to express his surprise that the English merchants had violated the French territory, in order to trade with the Indians: he threatened that he would cause them to be seized, wherever he could find them. This traffic, however, not having been discontinued, detachments of French and Indians made prisoners of the English traders, at the commencement of the year 1751.

The Indians friendly to England, indignant at the outrage their confederates had sustained, assembled, and, scouring the forests, fell upon the French traders, whom they transported to Philadelphia. Not content with this vengeance, the inhabitants of Virginia despatched to M. de Saint Pierre, commanding, for the king of France, a fort, situated upon the Ohio, major Washington, the same who commanded afterwards the American armies, with orders to demand an explanation of these acts of hostility, and summon him to draw off his troops. Saint Pierre answered, that he could not comply with the demands of the English; that the country appertained to the king of France, his master; that the English had no right to traffic upon those rivers; that, consequently, in execution of the orders he had received, he should cause to be seized and conducted to Canada, every Englishman who should attempt to trade upon the river Ohio, and its dependencies.

This proceeding of the French greatly incensed the ministers of Great Britain; they could not endure to see their friends and confederates oppressed. Their resolution was soon taken; they despatched instructions to America, that resistance should be made, by force of arms, to the usurpations of the French. This order arrived seasonably in Virginia; hostilities immediately followed, and blood flowed on both sides.

The Board, which in England superintends especially the interests of commerce and the plantations, perceiving that the colonists, divided among themselves, could not resist, without delay and disadvantage, the enterprises of an audacious and determined people, supported by a great number of Indians, recommended to the different provinces to choose deputies, to convene for the purpose of forming a general confederation, and a formal alliance with the Indians, in the name and under the protection of his Britannic majesty. It was agreed that the assembly of the governors and chief men of each colony should be convened at Albany, situated upon the Hudson river. This convention, after having conciliated the affection of the Indians of the Six Tribes, by suitable presents, proceeded to deliberate upon the most expedient means of defending themselves and their effects from the attacks of the enemy.

They came to the resolution, that it was of urgent importance to unite all the colonies, by a general league. The conditions of it were concluded on the 4th of July, 1754. They purported, in substance, that a petition should be presented to parliament, to obtain



an act for the establishment of a general government in America ; that, under this government, each colony should preserve its internal constitution, with the exception of the changes introduced by the same act ; that the general government should be administered by a president-general, appointed and paid by the crown, and by a grand council, elected by the representatives of the people of the colonies ; that the president-general should be invested with the right of negative over the acts of the grand council, and authorised to put them in execution ; that with the advice of the grand council, he should have authority to conclude, and carry into effect, any treaties with the Indians, in which all the colonies should have a common interest, as also to make peace with them, or to declare war against the same ; and to take the measures he might judge suitable for regulating the traffic with these tribes ; that he should have power to purchase of the Indians, and for account of the crown, lands, situated without the territories of the particular colonies ; that he should have authority to establish new colonies upon the acquired lands, and to make laws for the regulation and government of these colonies ; that he should have power to levy and pay troops, to construct fortresses, and to equip a fleet for the defence of the coasts, and the protection of commerce ; and also, in order to accomplish these purposes, that he should have power to impose such duties, taxes, or excises, as he might deem most convenient ; that he should appoint a treasurer-general, and a particular treasurer for the provinces in which it might be thought necessary ; that the president-general should have the right to appoint all officers of the service, by land or sea ; and that the appointment of all civil officers should appertain to the grand council ; and finally, that the laws passed by these two authorities could not be contrary, but should even be conformable to the English laws, and transmitted to the king for approbation.

Such was the model of future government, proposed by the colonies, and sent to England for determination. The Americans attached great hopes to the success of their plan ; already every appearance announced an open rupture with France, and the colonists affirmed, that if the confederation was approved, they should be quite able to defend themselves against the French arms, without any other succour on the part of England.

It is not difficult to perceive how much an order of things, thus constituted, would have impaired the authority of the British government, and approached the colonies towards independence. By this establishment, they would have obtained a local power, which would have exercised all the rights appertaining to sovereignty, however dependent it might appear to be on the mother country. But this project was far from being agreeable to the English ministry, who saw with a jealous eye, that the confederation proposed, furnished a plausible pretext for a concert of intrigues in America, all tending to



the prejudice of British sovereignty : and, therefore, notwithstanding the imminent peril of a foreign war against a powerful enemy, the articles of the confederation were not approved.

But the ministers of England were not disposed to let this occasion escape them, of increasing, if it was possible, the authority of the government in America, and especially that of imposing taxes ; a thing most of all desired on the one side of the ocean, and detested on the other. Instead, therefore, of the plan proposed by the Americans, the ministers drew up another, which they addressed to the governors of the colonies, to be offered by them to the colonial assemblies. It was proposed by the ministers ; ‘ That the governors of all the colonies, assisted by one or two members of the councils, should assemble, to concert measures, for the organisation of a general system of defence, to construct fortresses, to levy troops, with authority to draw upon the British treasury for all sums that might be requisite ; the treasure to be reimbursed by way of a tax, which should be laid upon the colonies, by an act of parliament.’

The drift of this ministerial expedient is not difficult to be understood, if it be considered that the governors, and members of the council, were almost all appointed by the king. Accordingly, the scheme had no success in America ; its motives were ably developed, in a letter of Benjamin Franklin to governor Shirley, who had sent him the plan of the ministers. In this letter, the seeds of the discord which followed soon after, begin to make their appearance.\*

The general court of Massachusetts wrote to their agent in London, to oppose every measure which should have for its object the establishment of taxes in America, under any pretext of utility whatever. On the contrary, the governors, and particularly Shirley, insisted continually, in their letters to the ministers, that the thing was just, possible, and expedient.

These suspicions, this jealous inquietude, which agitated the minds of the Americans, ever apprehensive of a parliamentary tax, obtained with the more facility, as they found them already imbittered by ancient resentments. They had never been able to accustom themselves to certain laws of parliament, which, though not tending to impose contributions, yet greatly restricted the internal commerce of the colonies, impeded their manufactures, or wounded, in a thousand shapes, the self-love of the Americans, by treating them as if they were not men of the same nature with the English, or as if, by clipping the wings of American genius, it was intended to retain them in a state of inferiority and degradation. Such was the act prohibiting the felling of pitch and white pine trees, not comprehended within enclosures ; such was that which interdicted the exportation from the colonies, and also the introduction from one colony

\* See Note I

into another, of hats, and woollens, of domestic manufacture, and forbade hatters to have at one time, more than two apprentices; also that passed to facilitate the collection of debts in the colonies, by which houses, lands, slaves, and other real effects, were made liable for the payment of debts; and finally, that which was passed in 1733, at the instance of the sugar colonies, which prohibited the importation of sugar, rum, and molasses, from the French and Dutch colonies in North America, without paying an exorbitant duty. To these should be added another act of parliament, passed in 1750, according to which, after the 24th of June of the same year, certain works in iron could not be executed in the American colonies; by a clause of the same act, the manufacture of steel was forbidden. Nor should we omit another, which regulated and restricted the bills of credit issued by the government of New England, and by which it was declared, that they should not have legal currency in the payment of debts, that English creditors might not be injured by the necessity of receiving a depreciated paper, instead of money. This regulation, though just, the Americans received with displeasure, as tending to discredit their currency. Hence originated the first discontents on the part of the colonists, and the first sentiments of distrust on the part of the English.

At the same time, it was pretended, in England, that if the colonists, on account of the commercial restrictions, so beneficial to the mother country, had merely demanded to be treated with tenderness and equity in the imposition of taxes, nothing would have been more just and reasonable; but that it could not be at all endured, that they should refuse the European country every species of ulterior succour; that England, in reserving to herself the commerce of her colonies, had acted according to the practice of all modern nations; that she had imitated the example of the Spaniards and of the Portuguese, and that she had done so with a moderation unknown to the governments of these nations. In founding these distant colonies, it was said, England had caused them to participate in all the rights and privileges that are enjoyed by English subjects themselves in their own country; leaving the colonists at liberty to govern themselves, according to such local laws as the wisdom and prudence of their assemblies had deemed expedient; in a word, she had granted the colonies the most ample authority to pursue their respective interests, only reserving to herself the benefit of their commerce, and a political connexion under the same sovereign. The French and Dutch colonies, and particularly those of Spain and Portugal, were far from being treated with the same indulgence; and also, notwithstanding these restrictions, the subject of so much complaint, the English colonies had immense capitals in their commerce, or in their funds; for besides the rich cargoes of the products of their lands, exported in British ships which came to trade in their ports, the

Americans had their own ships, which served to transport with an incredible profit, their productions and merchandise, not only to the mother country, but also, thanks to her maternal indulgence, to almost all parts of the world, and to carry home the commodities and luxuries of Europe, at will. And thus, in the English colonies, the enormous prices at which European merchandise is sold in the Spanish and Portuguese establishments, were not only unusual, but absolutely unheard of; it was even remarkable that many of these articles were sold in the American colonies at the same, or even at a lower price than in England itself. The restrictions imposed by Great Britain upon the American commerce, tended rather to a just and prudent distribution of this traffic, between all the parts of its vast dominions, than to a real prohibition; if English subjects were allowed to trade in all parts of the world, the same permission was granted to American subjects, with the exception of the north of Europe, and the East Indies. In Portugal, in Spain, in Italy, in all the Mediterranean, upon the coasts of Africa, in all the American hemisphere, the ships of the English colonies might freely carry on commerce. The English laws, for the protection of this commerce, were wise and well conceived, since they were calculated to increase the exportation of their own produce from the American ports, and to facilitate, for the colonists, the means of clearing their forests and cultivating their soil, by the certain vent of an immense quantity of timber, with which their country is covered. They could not, it was admitted, procure themselves certain articles, except in the ports of England; but it was just to consider, that the American lands, from their nature and vast extent, must offer sufficient occupation both for the minds and the hands of the inhabitants, without its being necessary that they should ramble abroad in search of gain, like the inhabitants of other countries, already cultivated to perfection.

Besides, if England reserved to herself an exclusive commerce, in certain kinds of merchandise, how did this concern, or how injure, the Americans? These objects appertaining for the most part to the refined luxury of social life, in what country could they procure them in greater perfection, or at a more moderate price, than in England? The affection and liberality of the British government towards its colonies, had gone so far, as not only to abstain from imposing duties upon English manufactures destined for their ports, but even had induced it to exempt foreign merchandise from all duties, when exported by England to America; thus causing it to become so common in some colonies, as to be sold at a lower price than in certain countries of Europe.

It should not be forgotten, that the most entire liberty was granted for the exchange of productions between North America and the islands of the West Indies, a trade from which the English colonists derived immense advantages. And in fact, notwithstanding the re-



strictions laid upon the commerce of the Americans, did there not remain amply sufficient to render them a rich, happy, and enterprising people? Was not their prosperity known, and even envied, by the whole world? Assuredly, if there was any part of the globe where man enjoyed a sweet and pleasant life, it was especially in English America. Was not this an irrefragable proof, a striking example, of the maternal indulgence of England towards her colonies? Let the Americans compare their condition with that of foreign colonists, and they would soon confess, not without gratitude towards the mother country, both their real felicity, and the futility of their complaints.

But all these and other considerations that were alleged by England, had not the effect to satisfy the Americans, and many discontents remained. The French, animated by the spirit of rivalry, which has so long existed between their nation and the British, neglected no means of inflaming the wounds which the Americans had received, or thought they had received, from their fellow citizens in England. The flourishing state of the English colonies, was a spectacle which the French had long been unable to observe with indifference. They had at first the design of establishing others for themselves, in some part of this immense continent, hoping to reap from them the same benefits which the English derived from theirs; and to be able, at length, to give another direction to the commerce of America, and of Europe. They intended, by good laws, or by the employment of their arms, to repair the disadvantages of soil and of climate, observable in the countries which had fallen to their share. But the French government being more inclined for arms than for commerce, and the nation itself having a natural bias much stronger in favor of the one than towards the other of these professions, their resolutions were soon taken accordingly. And as their character, also, disposes them to form vast designs, and renders them impatient to enjoy without delay, they began immediately to fortify themselves, and to enlarge their limits. Bastions, redoubts, arsenals, and magazines, were established at every point, and in a short time a line of French posts was seen to extend from one extremity of the continent to the other; but military power can neither supply population nor commerce, nor develop the advantages of either. These fortresses, these arms, these garrisons, occupied desert or sterile regions. An immense solitude, impenetrable forests, surrounded them on all sides.

The conduct of the English was very different; they advanced only step by step, restricting themselves to the cultivation of what they possessed, and not seeking to extend themselves, until urged by the exigencies of an increased population. Their progress was therefore slow, but sure; they occupied no new lands, until those they had occupied at first were carried to the highest degree of cul-



tivation, and inhabited by a sufficient number of individuals. A method so different, could not fail to produce effects totally contrary; and in effect, a century after the foundation of the English and French colonies, the former presented the image of fertility and abundance, while the latter exhibited but a sterile and scarcely inhabited region.

Meanwhile the French reflecting that either from the rigor of the climate, or the sterility of the soil, or from defect of industry, or of suitable laws, they could not hope to direct towards their establishment the commerce of the English colonies, or at least to share its benefits; convinced, on the other hand, that these colonies were an inexhaustible source of riches and power for a rival nation, they resolved to resort to arms, and to obtain by force what they had failed to acquire by their industry. They hoped that the discontent of the Americans would manifest itself, and produce favorable events; or at least, that they would be less prompt to engage in the contest. They well knew that in the American arms, men, munitions, and treasure, must consist all the nerve and substance of the war.

Proceeding with their accustomed impatience, without waiting till their preparations were completed, they provoked the enemy, sometimes complaining that he had occupied lands appertaining to them, sometimes themselves invading or disturbing his possessions. This the British government deeply resented; and war between the two nations broke out, in the year 1755. But the effects little corresponded with such confident hopes; the councils of England being directed by William Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham, a man, for the power of his genius, and the purity of his manners, rather single, than rare; the affairs of Great Britain succeeded so prosperously, and her arms acquired so decided a superiority, by land and sea, that her enemies, wearied, worsted, and having lost all hopes of victory, accepted the conditions of the peace of Paris, which was concluded in 1763. It guarantied to the English the possession of the vast continent of North America, from the banks of the Mississippi to the shores of Greenland; but the most important point for them, was the cession made them, by France, of Canada.

England also gained, by this treaty, many valuable islands in the West Indies; and so greatly was her power extended in the east, and so solid were the foundations on which it reposed, that her commerce and her arms soon reigned there almost without a competitor.

The Americans, on their part, displayed so much zeal in sustaining, with their arms and resources, the efforts of the common country, that, besides the glory they acquired, they were deemed worthy to participate in the advantages which resulted to England from so many successes.

The French renouncing the hope of reaping any advantage from the chances of war, resorted to the means of address; emissaries traversed the American continent, saying to all that would hear them, 'To what end have the Americans lavished their blood, encountered so many dangers, and expended so much treasure, in the late war, if the English supremacy must continue to press upon them with so much harshness and arrogance? In recompense of such fidelity, of so much constancy, the English government, perhaps, has moderated its prohibitions, has enfranchised commerce from trammels so prejudicial to the interests of America? Perhaps the odious and so much lamented laws against manufactures, have been repealed? Perhaps the Americans no longer need toil upon their lands, or traverse the immensity of the seas, exclusively to fill the purses of English merchants? Perhaps the government of England had shown a disposition to abandon for ever the project of parliamentary taxes? Is it not, on the contrary, too evident, that, with its forces and power, have increased its thirst of gold, and the tyranny of its caprices? Was not this admitted by Pitt himself, when he declared, the war being terminated, he should be at no loss to find the means of drawing a public revenue from America, and of putting an end, once for all, to American resistance? Has not England, at present being mistress of Canada, a province recently French, and, as such, more patient of the yoke, has she not the means of imposing it on her colonists themselves, by the hand of her numerous soldiery? Is it not time that the Americans, no longer in a state of infancy, should, at length, consider themselves a nation, strong and formidable of itself? Is it only for the utility of England they have demonstrated, in the late war, what they were capable of achieving? And by what right should a distant island pretend to govern, by its caprices, an immense and populous continent? How long must the partialities and the avarice of England be tolerated? Did ever men, arms, riches, courage, climate, invite to a more glorious enterprise? Let the Americans, then, seize the occasion, with a mind worthy of themselves, now they have proved their arms, now that an enormous public debt overwhelms England, now that her name has become detestable to all! America can place her confidence in foreign succours. What could be objected to a resolution so generous? Consanguinity? But have not the English hitherto treated the colonists more as vassals, than as brothers? Gratitude? But have not the English strangled it, under the pretensions of that mercantile and avaricious spirit which animates them?"

The general state of Europe was eminently favorable to the secret designs of France. It is certain, that at this epoch, all the powers concurred in considering the enormous increase of the strength of the British nation, both upon land and sea, as imminent-ly menacing to the repose and liberty of Europe; excessive pros-

perity but too rarely permitting men to know where to limit their enterprises. Supported with one hand upon her colonies of America, and with the other upon her possessions of the East Indies, England seemed to press the two extremities of the globe, and to aspire at the entire dominion of the ocean. From the day in which was concluded the peace of 1763, England was viewed with the same jealousy which France had inspired under Lewis XIV. She was the object of the same umbrage, of the same distrusts. All desired to see her power reduced; and the more she had shown herself formidable in the preceding war, the more ardently was it wished to take advantage of the present peace, to humble and reduce her. These wishes were much the most fervent with the maritime states, and especially in Holland, to whom England, in these late times, had caused immense losses. The English squadrons had often interrupted, and sometimes by the most outrageous proceedings, the commerce, in the munitions of war, which the Dutch carried on with France; and, on many occasions, the officers of the British navy made use of this pretext to detain ships, laden with articles that could not really be considered as munitions of war.

The kingdoms of the north reluctantly supported the prepotence of England, and openly complained that she had presumed to harass the commerce of neutrals, in time of war. It was evident they were prepared to seize the first occasion to give her a check. But France, more than any other power, being of a martial spirit, was inflamed with a desire to avenge her defeats, to repair her losses, and reconquer her glory, eclipsed by recent discomfiture; she was incessantly occupied with calculations which might lead to this object of all her wishes; and no means more efficacious could be offered her for attaining it, than to lacerate the bosom of her adversary, by separating from England the American colonies, so important a part of her power and resources.

Excited by so many suggestions, the inhabitants of English America conceived an aversion, still more intense, for the avaricious proceedings of the British government. Already, those who were the most zealous for liberty, or the most ambitious, had formed in the secret of their hearts, the resolution to shake off the yoke of England, whenever a favorable occasion should present. This design was encouraged by the recent cession of Canada: while that province continued a dependency of France, the vicinity of a restless and powerful nation kept the colonists in continual alarm; they were often constrained to solicit the succours of England, as those from which alone they could expect protection against the incursions of the enemy. But the French having abandoned Canada, the Americans necessarily became more their own protectors; they placed greater reliance upon their own strength, and had less need of recurring to others, for their particular security. It should be consi-



dered, besides, that in the late war a great number of the colonists had renounced the arts of peace, and assuming the sword instead of the spade, had learned the exercise of arms, inured their bodies to military fatigues, and their minds to the dangers of battle: they had, in a word, lost all the habits of agriculture and of commerce, and acquired those of the military profession. The being that has the consciousness of his force, becomes doubly strong, and the yoke he feels in a condition to break, is borne with reluctance: thus, the skill recently acquired in the use of arms, become general among the Americans, rendered obedience infinitely more intolerable to them. They considered it a shameful and outrageous thing, that a minister, residing at a distance of three thousand miles from their country, could oppress, by his agents, those who had combated with so much valor, and obtained frequent victories over the troops of a powerful, brave, and warlike nation. They often reflected, that this prosperity, in which England exulted, and which was the object of envy to so many nations, was in great part the work of their hands. They alleged that they had repaid with the fruit of their toils, and even with their blood, the fostering cares with which the mother country had protected and sustained them, in the infancy of their establishment: that now there was a greater parity between the two nations, and therefore they had claims to be treated on terms of greater equality. Thus the Americans habitually discoursed, and perhaps the less timid among them aspired to loftier things. The greater number, however, satisfied with the ancient terms of connexion with England, were reluctant to dissolve it, provided she would abandon all idea of ulterior usurpations. Even the most intrepid in the defence of their privileges, could not endure the thought of renouncing every species of dependence on their legitimate sovereign. This project they condemned the more decidedly, as they perceived that in its execution they must not only encounter all the forces of England, by so many victories become formidable to the universe, but also must resort to the assistance of a nation, in language, manners and customs, so different from themselves: of a nation they had so long been accustomed to hate, and to combat under the banners of their mother country.

Notwithstanding the suggestions of the French, and the new impulse which their military essays had given to the minds of the Americans, this state of things might have continued still for a long time, if, after the conclusion of the peace of 1763, England had not conceived the extravagant idea of new taxes, of new prohibitions, of new outrages. The English commerce, about the close of the war with France, having arrived at the highest point of prosperity, it would be difficult to estimate the immense number of vessels which brought the productions of all parts of the globe into the ports of Great Britain, and received, in exchange, the produce, and espe-

cially the manufactures, of the country, esteemed above all others in foreign markets; and, as these various commodities were subject, when introduced or exported, to duties, more or less considerable, this commerce had become a source of riches for the public treasury. But, it soon appeared that, to the great prejudice of this revenue, the increase of smuggling was in proportion to that of commerce. Government, desirous of arresting so pernicious a scourge, made a regulation, in 1764, by which it was enjoined the commanders of vessels stationed upon the coasts of England, and even those of ships that were destined for America, to perform the functions of revenue officers, and conform themselves to the rules established for the protection of the customs; a strange and pernicious measure, by which those brave officers, who had combated the enemy with so much glory, found themselves degraded into so many tide-waiters and bailiffs of the revenue. The most deplorable effects soon resulted from it; the naval commanders, little conversant with the regulations of the custom-house, seized and confiscated promiscuously the cargoes prohibited, and those that were not.

This confusion was the occasion of manifold abuses, which, if they were soon repaired in England, could not be remedied without extreme difficulty in America, from the distance of places, and the formalities required. Hence loud complaints were heard from all the colonies against the law. It produced, however, consequences still more pernicious. A commerce had been established, for a great length of time, between the English and Spanish colonies, extremely lucrative to both the parties, and, ultimately also to England. On the part of the British colonies, the principal objects of this traffic were the manufactures of England, which the Americans had acquired in exchange for their productions, and on the part of the Spanish, gold and silver, in specie or ingots, cochineal, medicinal drugs; besides live stock, especially mules, which the Americans transported to the islands of the West Indies, where they were demanded at great prices. This commerce procured for the Americans an abundance of these metals, and enabled them to make ample purchases of English merchandise; and furnished their own country, at the same time, with a sufficient quantity of gold and silver coin.

This traffic, if it was not prohibited by the commercial laws of England, was not expressly authorised. Accordingly, the new revenue officers believed it was their duty to interrupt its course, as if it had been contraband; and captured, without distinction, all vessels, whether English or foreign, laden with merchandise of this nature. Hence, in a short time, this commerce was destroyed, to the great prejudice, not only of the colonies upon the continent, but even of the English islands themselves, and particularly of Jamaica.

From the same cause proceeded the ruin of another very important commerce, which was exercised between the English colonies of America on the one part, and the islands appertaining to France on the other; and which had been productive of the greatest reciprocal utility. Its material consisted principally of such productions and commodities as were superfluous to the one, and totally wanting to the other. It is, therefore, not surprising, that the colonists, at the news of losses so disastrous, should have resolved not to purchase, in future, any English stuffs, with which they had been accustomed to clothe themselves; and, as far as possible, to use none but domestic manufactures. They determined, besides, to give every encouragement to those manufactories which wrought the materials abundantly produced by their lands and animals. But in Boston, particularly, a rich and populous city, where the luxury of British merchandise had been extensively introduced, it is difficult to express how extremely the public mind was exasperated, or with what promptitude all the inhabitants renounced superfluities, and adhered to the resolution of returning to the simplicity of early times: a remarkable example of which was soon observed in the celebration of funerals, which began to take place without habiliments of mourning, and without English gloves. This new economy became so general at Boston, that, in the year 1764, the consumption of British merchandise was diminished upwards of ten thousand pounds sterling. Other towns followed this example; and, in a short time, all the colonists concurred in abstaining from the use of all objects of luxury, produced by the manufactories, or by the soil, of England. Besides this, and even of necessity, from the scarcity of money, the merchants of the colonies, finding themselves debtors for large sums to the English, and having no reason to expect new advances, without new payments, which they were not in a situation to make, resorted also to the plan of non-consumption; they renounced all purchase and all expense, to the incredible prejudice of the manufacturers in England.

But the English government did not stop here: as if not satisfied with having excited the discontent of the colonists, it desired also to urge them to desperation. In the month of March, 1764, the parliament passed a regulation, by which, if on the one hand a traffic was permitted between the American colonies and the French islands of the West Indies, and others appertaining to other European powers; on the other, such enormous duties were imposed on the merchandise imported from the latter, as to create, as usual, an almost universal contraband, in every article, with immense disadvantage to the commerce itself, and equal prejudice to mercantile habits and probity. To crown so great an evil, it was ordered, by the same bill, that the sums proceeding from these duties should be paid, in specie, into the treasury of England. The execution of



this ordinance must have completely drained the colonies of the little money they had remaining, to be transported to Europe.

The secret exasperation redoubled, at the first intelligence of measures so extraordinary. They remarked, that they were even contradictory; that it was requiring a thing, and, at the same time time, withholding the means to perform it; since the government deprived them of all faculty of procuring specie, and yet would have them furnish it, to be transported to a distance of three thousand miles. But, as if the ministry were afraid the tempest of indignation, excited by these new laws, should be appeased too soon, they wrested from the parliament another act, which appeared fifteen days after. It purported, that bills of credit, which might be issued in future by the American colonies, should no longer have legal currency in payments; and that, as to those in circulation, they likewise could not be received as legal payment, after the term prefixed for their redemption and extinction. It is true, however, that all the money proceeding from the duties above mentioned, was directed, by other clauses of the bill, to be kept in reserve, and could only be employed for expenses relative to the colonies; it is true, also, that at the same time the act was framed concerning bills of credit, some others were passed, to promote and regulate the reciprocal commerce between the colonies and mother country, and between the colonies themselves. But these regulations failed to produce the expected effects: for they were necessarily slow in their operation; while those which restricted and attacked the external commerce of the colonies, or shackled their domestic trade, were immediately operative. Some also attempted to demonstrate, that the money carried off by these duties must infallibly flow back into the colonies, for the payment and support of the troops stationed there, to protect and defend them. But who would guaranty to the colonists, that the troops should be quartered among them so long as the law might continue in force? If such was the intention of the legislator, why cause this treasure to travel, with no little risk and expense, from America to England, and thence back to the place from whence it came; thus imposing the necessity of passing it through so many and so different hands? Perhaps, they said, in order that it might have the honor of visiting the British exchequer? And why was it not more expedient to employ it where it was found, without so many voyages and circuits? This plainly demonstrated, that it was but a pretext for the most pernicious designs. Besides, for what purpose, for what good, were so many troops maintained in America? External enemies at present there were none; and for the repression of the Indians, the colonies were, doubtless, sufficient of themselves. But the fact was, they continued, the ministers had formed a design to oppress their liberty; and for this purpose did they arm themselves with so many soldiers, and incur such vast expense, in the midst of a people abounding in loyalty and innocence.

All these new regulations, which succeeded each other with such precipitation, were indeed but too well calculated to surprise and alarm the inhabitants of North America. Such a proceeding on the part of the government appeared to them, and was in fact, both new and inauspicious. They felt it profoundly; and, by their remonstrances, demonstrated how unjustly they were aggrieved, and demanded incessantly to be restored to their former condition. But they did not stop at bare complaints. When they found that their remonstrances were ineffectual, they resolved to employ some more efficacious means to convince the ministers of the error they had committed. The resolutions taken against British manufactures, which at first had been merely individual, now became general, by combinations to this effect, contracted in the principal cities of America, which were observed with an astonishing constancy and punctuality. Great Britain experienced from these associations an immense detriment, and feared, not without reason, still greater; for, as they comprehended men of all conditions, they tended, by degrees, to conduct the manufactures of the country to a certain degree of perfection, the more probable, as the abundance of raw materials would permit their products to be sold at very moderate prices. Finally, it was to be expected, that, with the progressive increase of industry, the manufactures of the colonies might supply with their fabrics the neighboring colonies of Spain and Portugal. But, without anticipating the future, it is certain that the interruption alone of commerce between the American colonies and England, was extremely prejudicial to the latter; for it is known, that the colonies, without including the foreign merchandise they received from the hands of England, annually purchased to the value of three millions sterling, of English productions or manufactures. The public revenues suffered materially, from the effects of this new policy; the duties upon the exportation of merchandise destined for America, and those upon the importation of articles which foreign merchants sent in exchange for the productions of the English colonies, experienced a continual diminution. Henceforth began to germinate those fatal seeds, which the British government, instead of extirpating, seemed to take pleasure in cultivating, till they produced all the ruin which followed.

But, although these unusual duties had excited a general discontent in America, and although the inhabitants complained of them bitterly, as unjust and oppressive burdens, they considered them, nevertheless, not as taxes or imposts, but merely as regulations of commerce, which were within the competency of parliament. They believed, indeed, that in this instance it had departed from that parental benevolence which it had discovered towards them during more than a century; still they did not think it had transcended the limits of its authority. But the English ministers revolved in their

minds a design far more lucrative for the exchequer, and still more prejudicial to the interests and liberty of the colonists. This was to impose taxes or excises upon the colonies, by acts of parliament; and to create, in this way, a branch of public revenue, to be placed at the disposal of parliament itself. This project, far from being new, had long been fermenting in English heads. Some of those schemers, who are ever ruminating new plans and expedients to filch money from the pockets of the people, had already suggested, in 1739, during the Spanish war, to Robert Walpole, then prime minister, the idea of taxing the colonies; but this man, no less sagacious than profoundly versed in the science of government and commerce, answered, with an ironical smile, 'I will leave this operation to some one of my successors, who shall have more courage than me, and less regard for commerce. I have always, during my administration, thought it my duty to encourage the commerce of the American colonies; and I have done it. Nay, I have even chosen to wink at some irregularities in their traffic with Europe; for my opinion is, that if, by favoring their trade with foreign nations, they gain five hundred thousand pounds sterling, at the end of two years, full two hundred and fifty thousand of it will have entered the royal coffers; and that by the industry and productions of England, who sells them an immense quantity of her manufactures. The more they extend their foreign commerce, the more will they consume of our merchandise. This is a mode of taxing them, more conformable to their constitution, and to our own.'

But, at the epoch in question, the power of England had arrived at such a height, that it appeared impossible for the American colonies, though supported by all Europe, to resist her will. So much glory and greatness, however, had not been acquired without enormous sacrifices; and the public debt amounted to the prodigious sum of one hundred and forty-eight millions sterling, or about six hundred and fifty-seven millions five hundred thousand dollars. Thus it had become necessary to search out every object, and every occupation, susceptible of taxes or contributions. It was, therefore, thought expedient, and even necessary, to tax the colonies, for whose security and prosperity, principally, a war so terrible had been waged, such dangers encountered, so much blood and treasure expended. As to the species of the tax, it was decided for that of stamped paper, which was already established in England; and it was understood, so far as related to its nature, to be the least odious to the Americans, provided, however, it was established by the president and the grand council, according to the plan of colonial administration proposed by themselves, and not by authority of parliament. There were even found Americans, who, being then in London, not only favored, but perhaps first suggested, this new mode of taxing the colonies; and, among others, it appears that a certain Huske, a



native of Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, was one of its principal promoters.

This proposition was received with eagerness, as are, commonly, all the projects of those who are industrious to extort money from the people. English ears could hear no sound more grateful than this; for if the people of England groaned under the weight of taxes, both old and new, they were persuaded, from what had been told them, that in America there was a redundancy of all good things. 'Shall our colonists,' they said, 'enjoy the magnificence of princes, while we must drudge, and consume ourselves with efforts to procure a scanty subsistence?' The officers, who had served in the colonies, painted, on their return, in vivid colors, the American prosperity and affluence.

These details were not so much exaggerated as might be thought, at the time of their residence in America. Money was then very abundant in the colonies, the government necessarily remitting thither considerable sums, for the support of the troops, and expenses of the war. At that time, American productions were in great request, and their commerce very flourishing. The inhabitants, being naturally courteous and hospitable, expended generously, to render their houses agreeable to strangers, then very numerous. The war terminated, all dangers averted, the power of an inveterate enemy, hitherto intrenched in the heart of the country, extinguished, the colonists conceived it a duty to offer the most honorable reception in their power to those who had contributed so greatly to their present security and felicity.

The necessity of drawing a public revenue from the colonies, being therefore no longer doubted, and the willingness of the colonists to concur in it, by means of the duty upon stamped paper, being presumed, as well as their ability to support it, the house of commons, on the 10th of March, 1764, voted a resolution, purporting 'that it was proper to charge certain stamp duties, in the colonies and plantations.' This resolution, not being followed, this year, by any other to carry it into effect, existed merely as an intention to be executed the succeeding year.

If the stamp act had been carried into immediate execution in the colonies, they would perhaps have submitted to it, if not without murmuring, at least without that open opposition which was manifested afterwards; and it is known how much more easily the people are retained in quiet, than appeased when once excited. The principal colonists would not have had time to launch into discussions, in which they predicted to their fellow-citizens the evils which must result from their consent to this new tax; and as evils inspire more alarm at a distance than at approach, the colonists, not having experienced from this sudden imposition the prejudice apprehended in the uncertain future, would probably have become tranquil; they cer-

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tainly would not have had so much scope to inflame each other against the duty, as they afterwards did. For no sooner was the news of the impost in question received in any place, than it was spread, as it were, in a moment, throughout the country, and produced such an impression upon the minds of all, and especially of the lower classes, that all orders of citizens, waiving their ancient rivalships, difference of habits, and diversity of opinions in political and religious matters, were unanimous in maintaining, that it was impossible to submit to a law enacted in a mode so contrary to ancient usages, to their privileges as colonists, and to their rights as English subjects. Thus, for having chosen to warn before the blow, the British government prepared in the colonies an unanimous and most determined concurrence of opinion against one of its solemn decrees; and deprived itself of that docility resulting among the people from their intestine divisions, and the diversity of their interests.

The prime minister, Grenville, had been the author of this delay, hoping the colonies, upon advice of the bill in agitation, if they disliked the stamp duty, would have proposed some other mode of raising the sum intended to be levied by it. Accordingly, when the agents of the colonies went to pay him their respects, he informed them that he was prepared to receive, on the part of the colonies, any other proposal of a tax which would raise the sum wanted; shrewdly insinuating, also, that it was now in their power, by consenting, to establish it as a principle, that they should be consulted before any tax whatever was imposed upon the colonies by authority of parliament. Many in England, and possibly the agents themselves, attributed this conduct of the minister to moderation; but beyond the Atlantic it found a quite different reception, all with one voice exclaiming that this was an interested charity. For they thought, that however civil his offers, the minister would nevertheless exact, to a penny, the entire sum he desired, which in substance was saying, that willingly or otherwise, they must submit to his good pleasure; and consequently, his complaisance was but that of an accomplished robber. It was known that he would not be satisfied with less than three hundred thousand pounds sterling a year, the sum considered necessary for the support of the army it was resolved to maintain in the colonies for their defence. Not one of the agents was authorised to comply. Two only alleged, they were commissioned to declare that their provinces were ready to bear their proportion of the duty upon stamps, when it should be established according to ancient usages. The minister, therefore, having heard no proposal that appeared to him acceptable, resolved to pursue the design of a stamp act. Meanwhile, the fermentation in America was violent, not only among private citizens, but also among the members of public and corporate bodies; and all were of one mind, in asserting that the parliament had no right to tax the colonies. In all

places, political circles and clubs were formed ; the subject of all conversations was the fatal tax. Every day, every hour, diminished the respect and affection of the Americans towards the British nation, and increased their disposition to resist. As it happens in all popular commotions, he that declaimed with the most vehemence was the most applauded, and deemed the best citizen. The benefits conferred by the mother country, during so long a period, were consigned to oblivion ; and it had become as frequent as it was grateful to the people, to read the list of British vexations. These outrages were represented in the most odious colors by the orators of the multitude, whose minds were continually exasperated by similar harangues. The assemblies of representatives, and particularly those of Massachusetts and Virginia, despatched instructions to their agents in London, to use all diligence, by all possible means, to prevent the intentional act from being passed into a law.

They also addressed remonstrances to the king, and to the two houses of parliament, all tending to the same end. But those of the province of Massachusetts were the most energetic and vehement. This province was particularly distinguished, for the warmth with which it had opposed the new and pernicious direction which the ministers had for some time given to American affairs. The colonists acquired a still more determined resolution, when they learned, that in the present contest they were not abandoned to themselves, but that many were found in the mother country itself, even persons illustrious by their rank, their merit, or their dignities, who, from conviction, from the desire of renown, or from a wish to supplant the ministers, were continually exclaiming, both in parliament and elsewhere, that ‘ Such was not the accustomed mode of conduct of the English government towards its subjects ; that it was a new tyranny, which, if tolerated, would one day rebound from the shores of America upon those of England ; the evil should be resisted in its principles ; that governments in prosperity were but too much disposed to arrogate an extension of power ; there was much appearance that the government of Great Britain inclined to imitate this usurpation ; that it was therefore essential to watch it with attention ; the desires and the arts of Scottish favorites were sufficiently notorious ; that America was the means or the instrument, but England the object. And what occasion was there for these new imposts ? To protect and defend America, or the conquered territories ? Was it to repress the Indian tribes ? The colonists, with their light arms, and divided into detachments, were more proper for this service than the heavy English infantry. The Americans had all the courage requisite to defend themselves, and to succour, if necessary, the advanced posts : they had given the proof of this, on numerous occasions. There no longer existed a powerful enemy upon the American continent : whence, therefore, these continual



apprehensions of an attack, when the vestige of an enemy is no where to be seen? And what necessity was there for maintaining an army in America, the expense of which must be extorted from the Americans? Precious fruits, truly, had already been gathered from this military parade! the minds of the colonists exasperated, affection converted into hatred, loyalty into a desire of innovation. In other times, had not the ministers obtained from the colonies, by legitimate means, and without such a display of troops, according to the exigency, all the succours at their disposal? Since they had been thought able to furnish subsidies to the mother country, they had never been demanded, except in the mode of requisitions on the part of the crown, addressed by the governors to the different assemblies. By adhering to this mode, the same subsidies might be obtained, without giving offence, and without danger of revolt. But they would exact a servile obedience, in order to introduce, in due time, into the very bosom of the kingdom, the principles and government of the Stuarts! Too certain indications had been remarked of this, the day George Grenville ventured to produce his project of a bill to authorise officers in the colonies to quarter their soldiers in the houses of the citizens; a thing expressly calculated to strike the people with terror, to degrade them by permitting themselves to be trampled upon, and thus prepare them to receive the intended taxes with submission. The murmurs which had arisen, from every quarter, against so shocking an enormity, had indeed alarmed the minister; but it was time to act more vigorously; for it was the duty of every good citizen to oppose these first attempts.'

But the ministers were not to be diverted from their plan; either because they were encouraged by the favorites concealed behind them, or from personal obstinacy, or because they believed, in defiance of all demonstration to the contrary, that the Americans would be intimidated by the confusion and dangerous uncertainty which would prevail in all their affairs, if, in their civil and commercial transactions, they did not make use of stamped paper, and thus pay the duty established. Hence the ministers were often heard to say, that the measure proposed should be a law which would execute itself. The memorials, the remonstrances, the petitions, the resolutions, of the American provinces, were rejected. The bill for imposing a stamp duty was therefore submitted to parliament, in its session of 1765. It is easy to imagine with what animation it was discussed. It may be doubted whether upon any other occasion, either in times past or present, there has been displayed more vigor or acuteness of intellect, more love of country, or spirit of party, or greater splendor of eloquence, than in these debates. Nor was the shock of opinions less violent, without the walls of Westminster. All Europe, it may be said, and especially the commercial countries, were attentive to the progress, and to the decision, of this important question.

The members of parliament who opposed the bill, discovered great energy. They cited the authority of the most celebrated political writers, such as Locke, Selden, Harrington, and Puffendorff, who establish it as an axiom, that the very foundation, and ultimate point in view, of all governments, is the good of society. Then, retracing their national history, they alleged ;

‘That it resulted from Magna Charta, and from all the writs of those times relative to the imposition of taxes for the benefit of the crown, and to the sending of representatives to parliament, as well as from the Declaration of Rights, and the whole history of the English constitution, that no English subject can be taxed, except, in their own phrase, ‘*per communem consensum parliamenti*,’ that is, by his own consent, or that of his representatives ; that such was the original and general right, which the inhabitants of the colonies, as English subjects, carried with them, when they left their native land, to establish themselves in these distant countries ; that therefore it must not be imagined their rights were derived from charters, which were granted them merely to regulate the external form of the constitution of the colonies ; but that the great interior foundation of their constitution was this general right of the British subject, which is the first principle of British liberty,—that is, that no man shall be taxed, but by himself, or by his representative.

‘The counties palatine of Chester, Durham and Lancaster,’ added these orators, ‘and the marches of Wales, were not taxed, except in their own assemblies or parliaments, until, at different times, they were called to participate in the national representation.

‘The clergy, until the late period, when they were admitted to a share in the general representation, always taxed themselves, and granted the king what they called *benevolences*, or free gifts.

‘There are some, who, extending the power of parliament beyond all limits, affect to believe that this body can do every thing, and is invested with all rights ; but this is not supported, and though true, could only be so in violation of the constitution ; for then there would exist in parliament, as might occur in the instance of a single individual, an arbitrary power. But the fact is, that many things are not within the power of parliament. It cannot, for example, make itself executive ; it cannot dispose of the offices that belong to the crown ; it cannot take the property of any man, not even in cases of enclosures, without his being heard. The Lords cannot reject a money bill, passed by the commons ; nor the commons erect themselves into a court of justice ; neither can the parliament of England tax Ireland.

‘It is the birthright of the colonists, as descendants of Englishmen, not to be taxed by any but their own representatives ; and so far from being represented in the parliament of Great Britain, they are not even virtually represented here, as the meanest inhabitants

of Great Britain are, in consequence of their intimate connexion with those who are actually represented.

‘And if laws made by the British parliament to tax all except its own members, or even all except such members and those actually represented by them, would be deemed tyrannical, how much more tyrannical and unconstitutional must not such laws appear to those who cannot be said to be either actually or virtually represented !

‘The people of Ireland are much more virtually represented in the parliament of Great Britain than the colonists, in consequence of the great number of Englishmen possessed of estates and places of trust and profit in Ireland, and their immediate descendants settled in that country, and of the great number of Irish noblemen and gentlemen in both houses of the British parliament, and the greater numbers still constantly residing in Great Britain. But, notwithstanding this, the British parliament has never claimed any right to tax the people of Ireland.

‘The first founders of the colonies were not only driven out of the mother country by persecution, but they left it at their own risk and expense. Being thus forsaken, if not worse treated, all ties, except those common to mankind, were dissolved between them. They absolved from all duty of obedience to her, as she dispensed herself from all duty of protection to them.

‘If they accepted of any royal charters on the occasion, it was done through mere necessity ; and, as this necessity was not of their own making, their charters cannot be binding upon them ; and even allowing these charters to be binding, they are only bound thereby to that allegiance which the supreme head of the realm may claim indiscriminately from all its subjects.

‘It is extremely absurd to affirm that the Americans owe any submission to the legislative power of Great Britain, which had not authority enough to shield them against the violences of the executive ; and more absurd still, to say that the people of Great Britain can exercise over them rights which that very people affirm they might justly oppose, if claimed over themselves by others ?

‘The English people combated long, and shed much blood, with a view of recovering those rights which the crown, it was believed, had usurped over themselves ; and how can they now, without becoming guilty of the same usurpation, pretend to exercise these rights over others ?

‘But, admitting that, by the charters granted to the Americans at the time of their emigration, and by them from necessity accepted, they are bound to make no laws but such as, allowing for the difference of circumstances, shall not clash with those of England, this no more subjects them to the parliament of England, than their having been laid under the same restraint with respect to the laws of Scotland, or any other country, would have subjected them to the parlia-



ment of Scotland, or the supreme authority of this other country ; since, by these charters, they have a right to tax themselves, for their own support and defence.

‘ Whatever assistance the people of Great Britain may have given to the people of the colonies, it must have been given either from motives of humanity and fraternal affection, or with a view of being one day repaid for it, and not as the price of their liberty ; at least the colonies can never be presumed to have accepted it in that light. If it was given from motives of humanity and fraternal affection, as the people of the colonies have never given the mother country any room to complain of them, so they never will. If, finally, it was given with a view of being one day repaid for it, the colonists are willing to come to a fair account, which, allowing for the assistance they themselves have often given the mother country, for what they must have lost, and the mother country must have gained, by preventing their selling to others at higher prices than they could sell to her, and their buying from others at lower prices than they could buy from her, would, they apprehend, not turn out so much to her advantage as she imagines.’

‘ Their having heretofore submitted to laws made by the British parliament, for their internal government, can no more be brought as a precedent against them, than against the English themselves their tameness under the dictates of a Henry, or the rod of a Star Chamber ; the tyranny of many being as grievous to human nature as that of a few, and the tyranny of a few as that of a single person.

‘ If liberty is the due of those who have sense enough to know the value of it, and courage enough to expose themselves to every danger and fatigue to acquire it, the American colonists are better entitled to possess it than even their brethren of Great Britain ; since they not only renounced their native soil, the love of which is so congenial with the human mind, and all those tender charities inseparable from it, but exposed themselves to all the risks and hardships unavoidable in a long voyage ; and, after escaping the danger of being swallowed up by the waves, encountered, upon those uninhabited and barbarous shores, the more cruel danger of perishing by a slow famine ; which having combated, and surmounted, with infinite patience and constancy, they have, as if by a miracle of Divine Providence, at length arrived at this vigorous and prosperous state, so eminently profitable to those from whom they derive their original.

‘ If, in the first years of their existence, some of the colonists discovered a turbulent humor, and all were exposed to the incursions of the neighboring tribes, a savage and hostile race, which condition required the interposition and assistance of the British parliament, they have now arrived to such a degree of maturity, in point of polity and strength, as no longer to need such interposition for the future ; and therefore, since the proportions are changed which existed be-

tween the two nations, it is proper also to change the terms of their ancient connexion, and adopt others, more conformable to their present respective power and circumstances.

‘The present statutes, promulgated by parliament, do not bind the colonies, unless they are expressly named therein ; which evidently demonstrates, that the English general laws do not embrace in their action the American colonies, but need to be sanctioned by special laws.

‘The colonies, therefore, stand in much the same relation towards England, as the barons with respect to the sovereigns, in the feudal system of Europe ; the obedience of the one, and the submission of the other, are restricted within certain limits.

‘The history of colonies, both ancient and modern, comes to the support of these views. Thus the Carthaginians, the Greeks, and other celebrated nations of antiquity, allowed their colonies a very great liberty of internal government, contenting themselves with the advantages they derived from their commerce. Thus the barbarians of the north, who desolated the Roman empire, carried with them their laws, and introduced them among the vanquished, retaining but an extremely slender obedience and submission towards the sovereigns of their country.

‘Thus also, in more recent times, the House of Austria had acted, in regard to its colonies of the Low Countries, before the latter totally withdrew themselves from its domination.

‘Such examples ought to apprise the English of the conduct they should pursue, in respect to their colonies ; and warn them of what they should avoid.’

‘The colonies are already sufficiently taxed, if the restrictions upon their commerce are taken into view. No other burden should, therefore, be laid upon the Americans, or they should be restored to an entire liberty of commerce ; for otherwise they would be charged doubly, than which nothing can be deemed more tyrannical.

‘It is not argued, however, that the American colonies ought not to be subject to certain external duties, which the parliament has authority to establish in their ports, or to some other restrictions, which have been laid upon their commerce by the act of navigation, or other regulations.

‘They are in the same case as all other colonies, belonging to the rest of the maritime powers in Europe ; from their first establishment, all commerce with foreign nations has been prohibited them.

‘What is spoken of are internal taxes, to be levied on the body of the people ; and it is contended, that before they can be liable to such taxes, they must first be represented.

‘Even admitting, what is denied, that the British parliament has the right to make laws for the colonies, still more to tax them without their concurrence, there lie many objections against all the duties

lately imposed on the colonies, and more still, and weightier, against that of the stamps lately projected by the ministers, and now proposed for the sanction of parliament. For, whereas these stamp duties were laid gradually on the people of Great Britain, they are now to be saddled, all at once, with all their increased weight, on those of the colonies; and if these same duties were thought so grievous in England, on account of the great variety of occasions in which they were payable, and the great number of heavy penalties, which the best meaning persons might incur, they must be to the last degree oppressive in the colonies, where the people, in general, cannot be supposed so conversant in matters of this kind, and numbers do not even understand the language of these intricate laws, so foreign to their ordinary pursuits of agriculture and commerce.\*

‘It should be added, that these laws, which savor too much of their native soil, and bear too distinctly the character of that subtilty for which the English financial system is distinguished, must be viewed by foreigners as insidious snares, and tend to discourage them from emigrating, with their families, to the American shores. Need any one be told how prejudicial this would prove to their growing population, and, by rebound, to the interests of England herself?

‘Finally, as the money produced by these duties, according to the terms of the bill proposed, is required to be paid into the English treasury, the colonies, already impoverished by commercial prohibitions, must, in a short time, be drained of all their specie, to the ruin of their commerce, both internal and external.’

On the part of the ministers, these objections were answered, as follows :

‘First of all, it is necessary to banish from the present question all this parade of science and erudition, so pompously displayed by our opponents, and which they have collected from the books of speculative men, who have written upon the subject of government. All these refinements and arguments of natural lawyers, such as Locke, Selden, Puffendorff, and others, are little to the purpose, in a question of constitutional law.

‘And nothing can be more absurd, than to hunt after antiquated charters, to argue from thence the present English constitution; because the constitution is no longer the same; and nobody knows what it was, at some of the times that are quoted; and there are things even in Magna Charta, which are not constitutional now. All these appeals, therefore, to the records of antiquity, prove nothing as to the constitution such as it now is.

‘This constitution has always been subject to continual changes and modifications, perpetually gaining or losing something; nor was the representation of the commons of Great Britain formed into any certain system, till the reign of Henry VII.

\* See Note II.



‘With regard to the modes of taxation, when we get beyond the reign of Edward I. or king John, we are all in doubt and obscurity ; the history of those times is full of uncertainty and confusion. As to the writs upon record, they were issued, some of them according to law, and some not according to law ; and such were those concerning ship money ; to call assemblies to tax themselves, or to compel benevolences ; other taxes were raised by escuage, or shield service, fees for knight’s service, and other means arising from the feudal system. Benevolences are contrary to law ; and it is well known how people resisted the demands of the crown, in the case of ship money ; and were prosecuted by the court.

‘With respect to the marches of Wales, this privilege of taxing themselves was but of short duration ; and was only granted these borderers, for assisting the king, in his wars against the Welsh in the mountains. It commenced and ended with the reign of Edward I. ; and when the prince of Wales came to be king, they were annexed to the crown, and became subject to taxes, like the rest of the dominions of England.

‘Henry VIII. was the first king of England who issued writs for it to return two members to parliament ; the crown exercised the right of issuing writs, or not, at pleasure ; from whence arises the inequality of representation, in our constitution of this day. Henry VIII. issued a writ to Calais, to send one burgess to parliament ; and one of the counties palatine was taxed fifty years to subsidies, before it sent members to parliament.

‘The clergy at no time were unrepresented in parliament. When they taxed themselves in their assemblies, it was done with the concurrence and consent of parliament.

‘The reasoning about the colonies of Great Britain, drawn from the colonies of antiquity, is a mere useless display of learning ; for it is well known the colonies of the Tyrians in Africa, and of the Greeks in Asia, were totally different from our system. No nation, before England, formed any regular system of colonisation, but the Romans ; and their colonial system was altogether military, by garrisons placed in the principal towns of the conquered provinces ; and the jurisdiction of the principal country was absolute and unlimited.

‘The provinces of Holland were not colonies ; but they were states subordinate to the House of Austria, in a feudal dependence. And, finally, nothing could be more different from the laws and customs of the English colonies, and that inundation of northern barbarians, who, at the fall of the Roman empire, invaded and occupied all Europe. Those emigrants renounced all laws, all protection, all connexion with their mother countries : they chose their leaders, and marched under their banners, to seek their fortunes, and establish new kingdoms upon the ruins of the Roman empire.

‘ On the contrary, the founders of the English colonies emigrated under the sanction of the king and parliament ; their constitutions were modelled gradually into their present forms, respectively by charters, grants and statutes ; but they were never separated from the mother country, or so emancipated as to become independent, and *sui juris*.

‘ The commonwealth parliament were very early jealous of the colonies separating themselves from them ; and passed a resolution or act, and it is a question whether it is not now in force, to declare and establish the authority of England over her colonies. But if there was no express law, or reason founded upon any necessary inference from an express law, yet the usage alone would be sufficient to support that authority ; for, have not the colonies submitted, ever since their first establishment, to the jurisdiction of the mother country ? Have they not even invoked it in many instances ? In all questions of property, have not the appeals of the colonies been made to the privy council here ? And have not these causes been determined, not by the law of the colonies, but by the law of England ? And have they not peaceably submitted to these decisions ?

‘ These cases of recourse, however, have been very frequent. New Hampshire and Connecticut have been in blood about their differences ; Virginia and Maryland were in arms against each other. Does not this show the necessity of one superior decisive jurisdiction, to which all subordinate jurisdictions may recur ? Nothing, at any time, could be more fatal to the peace and prosperity of the colonies, than the parliament giving up its superintending authority over them. From this moment, every bond between colony and colony would be dissolved, and a deplorable anarchy would ensue. The elements of discord and faction, already diffused amongst them, are too well known, not to apprehend an explosion of this sort.

‘ From this to the total annihilation of the present colonial system, to the creation of new forms of government, and falling a prey to some foreign potentate, how inevitable is their career !

‘ At present the several forms of their constitution are very various, having been established one after another, and dictated by the circumstances and events of the times ; the forms of government in every colony, were adapted from time to time, according to the size of the colony, and so have been extended again from time to time, as the numbers of the inhabitants, and their commercial connexions, outgrew the first model. In some colonies, at first there was only a governor, assisted by two or three counsellors ; then more were added ; then courts of justice were erected, then assemblies were created.

‘ As the constitutions of the colonies are made up of different principles, so they must, from the necessity of things, remain dependent upon the jurisdiction of the mother country ; no one ever

thought the contrary, till this new doctrine was broached. Acts of parliament have been made, not only without a doubt of their legality, but accepted with universal applause, and willingly obeyed. Their ports have been made subject to customs and regulations, which cramped and diminished their trade; and duties have been laid, affecting the very inmost parts of their commerce, and among others, that of the post; and no one ever thought, except these new doctors, that the colonies are not to be taxed, regulated, and bound by parliament.

‘There can be no doubt, but that the inhabitants of the colonies are as much represented in parliament, as the greatest part of the people of England are, among nine millions of whom, there are eight who have no votes in electing members of parliament; and, therefore, all these arguments, brought to prove the colonies not dependent on parliament, upon the ground of representation, are vain; nay, they prove too much, since they directly attack the whole present constitution of Great Britain. But the thing is, that a member of parliament, chosen for any borough, represents not only the constituents and inhabitants of that particular place, but he represents the inhabitants of every other borough in Great Britain. He represents the city of London, and all other the commons of the land, and the inhabitants of all the colonies and dominions of Great Britain, and is in duty and conscience bound to take care of their interests.

‘The distinction of internal and external taxes, is false and groundless. It is granted, that restrictions upon trade, and duties upon the ports, are legal, at the same time that the right of the parliament of Great Britain, to lay internal taxes upon the colonies, is denied. What real difference can there be in this distinction? Is not a tax, laid in any place, like a pebble falling into and making a circle in a lake, till one circle produces and gives motion to another, and the whole circumference is agitated from the centre?

‘Nothing can be more clear, than that a tax of ten or twenty per cent. laid upon tobacco either in the ports of Virginia or London, is a real duty laid upon the inland plantations of Virginia itself, an hundred miles from the sea, wherever the tobacco grows.

‘Protection is the ground that gives the right of taxation. The obligation between the colonies and the mother country is natural and reciprocal, consisting of defence on the one side, and obedience on the other; and common sense tells, that the colonies must be dependent in all points upon the mother country, or else not belong to it at all. The question is not what was law, or what was the constitution? but the question is, what is law now, and what is the constitution now?

‘And is not this law, is not this the constitution, is not this right, which without contradiction, and for so long a time, and in numberless instances, as such has been exercised on the one part, and approved by obedience on the other?



‘No attention whatever is due to these subtle opinions and vain abstractions of speculative men ; as remote from the common experience of human affairs, and but too well adapted to seduce and inflame the minds of those, who, having derived such signal advantages from their past submission, ought for the future also to obey the laws of their hitherto indulgent, but powerful mother.

‘Besides, is not the condition of the Americans, in many respects, preferable to that of the English themselves ? The expenses of internal and civil administration, in England, are enormous ; so inconsiderable, on the contrary, in the colonies, as almost to surpass belief.

‘The government of the church, productive of so heavy an expense in England, is of no importance in America ; there tithes, there sinecure benefices, are unknown. Pauperism has no existence in the colonies ; there, according to the language of Scripture, every one lives under his own fig tree ; hunger and nakedness are banished from the land ; and vagrants, or beggars, are never seen. Happy would it be for England, if as much could be affirmed of her subjects on this side of the ocean ! But the contrary, as every body knows, is the truth.

‘What nation has ever shown such tenderness towards its colonies as England has demonstrated for hers ? Have they, in their necessities, ever sought in vain the prompt succours of Great Britain ? Was it for their own defence against the enemy, or to advance their domestic prosperity, have not the most ample subsidies been granted them without hesitation ?

‘Independently of these benefits, what other state has ever extended to a part of its population this species of favor, which had been bestowed by England upon her colonies ? She has opened them a credit without which they could never have arrived at this height of prosperity, which excites the astonishment of all that visit them ; and this considered, the tax proposed must be deemed a very moderate interest for the immense sums which Great Britain has lent her colonies.

‘As to the scarcity of money, the declamations upon this head are equally futile : gold and silver can never be wanting in a country so fertile in excellent productions as North America. The stamp duty proposed being not only moderate, but even trivial, could never withdraw from the country so considerable a quantity of specie, as to drain its sources, especially as the product of this duty will be kept in reserve in the treasury, and being destined to defray the expenses of the protection and defence of the colonies, must therefore of necessity be totally reimbursed.

‘This supremacy of England, about which such a clamor has been raised, amounts then in reality, to nothing but a superiority of power and of efforts to guard and protect all her dependencies, and

all her dominions ; which she has done at a price that has brought her to the brink of ruin. Great Britain, it is true, has acquired in this struggle a glory which admits of no addition ; but all her colonies participate in this. The Americans are not only graced by the reflected splendor of their ancient country, but she has also lavished upon them the honors and benefits which belong to the members of the British empire, while England alone has paid the countless cost of so much glory.'

Such were the arguments advanced in parliament, with equal ability and warmth, on the one part, and on the other, in favor, and against, the American tax. While the question was in suspense, the merchants of London, interested in the commerce of America, tortured with the fear of losing or not having punctually remitted, the capitals they had placed in the hands of the Americans, presented a petition against the bill, on the day of its second reading ; for they plainly foresaw that among their debtors, some from necessity, and others with this pretext, would not fail to delay remittances. But it was alleged, that the usage of the house of commons is not to hear petitions directed against tax laws ; and this of the London merchants, was, accordingly, rejected.

Meanwhile, the ministers, and particularly George Grenville, exclaimed ;

'These Americans, our own children, planted by our cares, nourished by our indulgence, protected by our arms, until they are grown to a good degree of strength and opulence ; will they now turn their backs upon us, and grudge to contribute their mite to relieve us from the heavy load which overwhelms us ?'

Colonel Barre caught the words, and with a vehemence becoming in a soldier, said ;

'*Planted by your cares !* No ! your oppression planted them in America ; they fled from your tyranny, into a then uncultivated land, where they were exposed to almost all the hardships to which human nature is liable, and among others, to the savage cruelty of the enemy of the country, a people the most subtle, and, I take upon me to say, the most truly terrible, of any people that ever inhabited any part of God's earth ; and yet, actuated by principles of true English liberty, they met all these hardships with pleasure, compared with those they suffered in their own country, from the hands of those that should have been their friends.'

'*They nourished up by your indulgence ?* They grew by your neglect ; as soon as you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule over them, in one department and another, who were perhaps, the deputies of the deputies of some members of this house, sent to spy out their liberty, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon them ; men, whose behavior, on many occasions, has caused the blood of these sons of liberty to recoil

within them ; men, promoted to the highest seats of justice, some of whom, to my knowledge, were glad, by going to foreign countries, to escape the vengeance of the laws in their own.

*' They protected by your arms ?* They have nobly taken up arms in your defence, have exerted their valor amidst their constant and laborious industry, for the defence of a country, whose frontiers, while drenched in blood, its interior parts have yielded for your enlargement, the little savings of their frugality, and the fruits of their toils. And *believe me, remember,* I this day told you so, that the same spirit which actuated that people at first, will continue with them still ; but prudence forbids me to explain myself any further. God knows, I do not, at this time, speak from motives of party heat ; what I assert proceeds from the sentiments of my heart. However superior to me in general knowledge and experience, any one here may be, yet I claim to know more of America, having seen, and been more conversant in that country. The people there are as truly loyal, as any subjects the king has ; but a people jealous of their liberties, and who will vindicate them, if they should be violated ; but the subject is delicate ; I will say no more.'

This discourse was pronounced by the colonel without preparation, and with such a tone of energy, that all the house remained, as it were, petrified with surprise, and all viewed him with attention, without uttering a word.

But the pride of the ministers would not permit them to retreat, and the parliament could not hear, with patience, its authority to tax America, called in question. Accordingly, many voted in favor of the bill, because they believed it just and expedient ; others, because the ministers knew how to make it appear such ; others, finally, and perhaps the greater number, from jealousy of their contested authority. Thus, when the house divided on the 7th of February, 1765, the nays were not found to exceed fifty, and the yeas were two hundred and fifty. The bill was, therefore, passed, and was approved with great alacrity in the house of lords, on the 8th of March following, and sanctioned by the king the 22d of the same month.

Such was this famous scheme, invented by the most subile, by the most sapient heads in England ; whether the spirit of sophistry in which it originated, or the moment selected for its promulgation, be the most deserving of admiration, is left for others to pronounce. Certain it is, that it gave occasion in America to those intestine commotions, that violent fermentation, which, after kindling a civil war, involving all Europe in its flames, terminated in the total disjunction from the British empire of one of its fairest possessions.

If in this great revolution, the arms of England suffered no diminution of splendor and glory, owing to the valor and gallantry displayed by her soldiers throughout the war, it cannot be disguised that



her power and influence were essentially impaired among all nations of the world.

The very night the act was passed, doctor Franklin, who was then in London, wrote to Charles Thomson, afterwards secretary of Congress, '*The sun of liberty is set; the Americans must light the lamps of industry and economy.*' To which Mr. Thomson answered; '*Be assured we shall light torches of quite another sort.*' Thus predicting the convulsions that were about to follow.

END OF BOOK FIRST.

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## NOTES TO BOOK I.



NOTE I.—PAGE 22.

### FRANKLIN'S LETTER.

'EXCLUDING the people of the colonies from all share in the choice of the grand council, would probably give extreme dissatisfaction, as well as the taxing them by act of parliament, where they have no representation.

'In matters of general concern to the people, and especially when burthens are to be laid upon them, it is of use to consider, as well what they will be apt to think and say, as what they ought to think; I shall, therefore, as your excellency requires it of me, briefly mention what of either kind occurs to me on this occasion.

'First, they will say, and perhaps with justice, that the body of the people in the colonies are as loyal, and as firmly attached to the present constitution, and reigning family, as any subjects in the king's dominions.

'That there is no reason to doubt the readiness and willingness of the representatives they may choose, to grant, from time to time, such supplies for the defence of the country, as shall be judged necessary, so far as their abilities allow.

'That the people in the colonies, who are to feel the immediate mischiefs of invasion and conquest by an enemy, in the loss of their estates, lives, and liberties, are likely to be better judges of the quantity of forces necessary to be raised and maintained, forts to be built and supported, and of their own abilities to bear the expense, than the parliament of England, at so great a distance.

'That governors often come to the colonies merely to make fortunes with which they intend to return to Britain; are not always men of the best abilities or integrity; have, many of them, no estates here, nor any natural connexions with us, that should make them heartily concerned for our welfare; and might, possibly, be fond of raising and keeping up more forces than necessary, from the profits accruing to themselves, and to make provision for their friends and dependants.

'That the counsellors, in most of the colonies, being appointed by the crown, on the recommendation of governors, are often persons of small estates, frequently dependent on the governors for offices, and therefore too much under influence.

'That there is, therefore, great reason to be jealous of a power in such governors and councils, to raise such sums as they shall judge necessary, by drafts on the lords of the treasury, to be afterwards laid on the colonies by act of parliament, and paid by the people here; since they might abuse it, by projecting useless expeditions, harassing the people, and taking them from their labor to execute such projects, merely to create offices and employments, and gratify their dependants, and divide profits.

'That the parliament of England is at a great distance, subject to be misinformed and misled by such governors and councils, whose united interests might, probably, secure them against the effect of any complaint from hence.

'That it is supposed an undoubted right of Englishmen, not to be taxed, but by their own consent, given through their representatives; that the colonies have no representatives in parliament.

'That to propose taxing them by parliament, and refuse them the liberty of choosing a representative council, to meet in the colonies, and consider and judge of the necessity of any general tax, and the quantum, shows a suspicion of their loyalty to the crown, or of their regard for their country, or of their common sense and understanding; which they have not deserved.

'That compelling the colonies to pay money without their consent, would be rather like raising contributions in an enemy's country, than taxing of Englishmen for their own public benefit; that it would be treating them as a conquered people, and not as true British subjects.

'That a tax laid by the representatives of the colonies might be easily lessened as the occasions should lessen; but being once laid by parliament, under the influence of the representations made by governors, would probably be kept up and continued for the benefit of governors, to the grievous burthen and discontentment of the colonies, and prevention of their growth and increase.

'That a power in governors, to march the inhabitants from one end of the British and French colonies to the other, being a country of at least one thousand five hundred miles long, without the approbation or the consent of their representatives first obtained, to such expeditions, might be grievous and ruinous to the people, and would put them upon a footing with the subjects of France in Canada, that now groan under such oppression from their governor, who, for two years past, has harassed them with long and destructive marches to Ohio.

'That if the colonies, in a body, may be well governed by governors and councils appointed by the crown, without representatives, particular colonies may as well, or better, be so governed; a tax may be laid upon them all by act of parliament, for support of government; and their assemblies may be dismissed as an useless part of the constitution.

'That the powers proposed by the Albany plan of union, to be vested in a grand council representative of the people, even with regard to military matters, are not so great as those which the colonies of Rhode Island and Connecticut are entrusted with by their charters, and have never abused; for by this plan, the president-general is appointed by the crown, and controls all by his negative; but in those governments, the people choose the governor, and yet allow him no negative.

'That the British colonies bordering on the French, are frontiers of the British empire; and the frontiers of an empire are properly defended at the joint expense of the body of the people in such empire; it would now be thought hard, by act of parliament, to oblige the Cinque Ports, or sea coasts of Britain, to maintain the whole navy, because they are more immediately defended by it, not allowing them, at the same time, a vote in choosing members of parliament; and as the frontiers of America bear the expense of their own defence, it seems hard to allow them no share in voting the money, judging of the necessity of the sum, or advising the measures.

'That besides the taxes necessary for the defence of the frontiers, the colonies pay yearly great sums to the mother country unnoticed: for,

1. Taxes paid in Britain by the land-holder, or artificer, must enter into and increase the price of the produce of land and manufactures made of it, and great part of this is paid by consumers in the colonies, who thereby pay a considerable part of the British taxes.

2. We are restrained in our trade with foreign nations; and where we could be supplied with any manufacture cheaper from them, but must buy the same dearer from Britain, the difference of price is a clear tax to Britain.

3. We are obliged to carry a part of our produce directly to Britain; and when the duties laid upon it lessen its price to the planter, or it sells for less than it would in foreign markets, the difference is a tax paid to Britain.

4. Some manufactures we could make, but are forbidden, and must take them of British merchants; *the whole price is a tax paid to Britain.*

5. By our greatly increasing demand and consumption of British manufactures, their price is considerably raised of late years; the advantage is clear profit to Britain, and enables its people better to pay great taxes; and much of it being paid by us, is clear tax to Britain.

6. In short, as we are not suffered to regulate our trade, *and restrain the importation* and consumption of British superfluities, as Britain can the consumption of foreign superfluities, our whole wealth centers finally amongst the merchants and inhabitants of Britain; and if we make them richer, and enable them better to pay their taxes, it is nearly the same as being taxed ourselves, and equally beneficial to the crown.

'These kind of secondary taxes, however, we do not complain of though we have no share in laying or disposing of them; but to pay immediate heavy taxes, in the laying, appropriation, and disposition of which, we have no part, and which, perhaps, we may know to be as unnecessary as grievous, must seem hard measures to Englishmen, who cannot conceive, that by hazarding their lives and fortunes in subduing and settling new countries, extending the dominion, and increasing the commerce of the mother



nation, they have forfeited the native rights of Britons, which they think ought rather to be given to them as due to such merit, if they had been before in a state of slavery.

‘These, and such kinds of things as these, I apprehend, will be thought and said by the people, if the proposed alteration of the Albany plan should take place. Then the administration of the board of governors and council so appointed, not having the representative body of the people to approve and unite in its measures, and conciliate the minds of the people to them, will probably become suspected and odious; dangerous animosities and feuds will arise between the governors and governed, and every thing go into confusion.’

This was the letter of Franklin.

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## NOTE II.—PAGE 43.

### STAMP ACT.

WHEREAS, by an act made in the last session of Parliament, several duties were granted, continued, and appropriated towards defraying the expenses of defending, protecting, and securing the British colonies and plantations in America: and whereas it is first necessary, that provision be made for raising a further revenue within your majesty's dominions in America, towards defraying the said expenses; we, your majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the *Commons of Great Britain*, in parliament assembled, have therefore resolved to give and grant unto your majesty the several rites and duties hereinafter mentioned; and do most humbly beseech your majesty that it may be enacted, And be it enacted by the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advise and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the first day of November, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-five, there shall be raised, levied, collected, and paid unto his majesty, his heirs, and successors, throughout the colonies and plantations in America, which now are, or hereafter may be, under the dominion of his majesty, his heirs and successors,

1. For every skin of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any declaration, plea, replication, rejoinder, demurrer, or other pleading, or any copy thereof, in any court of law within the British colonies and plantations in America, a stamp duty of three pence.

2. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written or printed, any special bail, and appearance upon such bail in any such court, a stamp duty of two shillings.

3. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which may be engrossed, written or printed, any petition, bill, or answer, claim, plea, replication, rejoinder, demurrer, or other pleading in any court of chancery or equity within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of one shilling and six pence.

4. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any copy of any petition, bill, answer, claim, plea, replication, rejoinder, demurrer, or other pleading, in any such court, a stamp duty of three pence.

5. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written or printed, any monition, libel, answer, allegation, inventory, or renunciation, in ecclesiastical matters, in any court of probate, court of the ordinary, or other court exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of one shilling.

6. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written or printed, any copy of any will, (other than the probate thereof,) monition, libel, answer, allegation, inventory, or renunciation, in ecclesiastical matters, in any such court, a stamp duty of six pence.

7. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written or printed, any donation, presentation, collation or institution, of or to any benefice, or any writ or instrument for the like purpose, or any register, entry, testimonial, or certificate of any degree taken in any university, academy, college, or seminary of learning, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of two pounds.

8. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any monition, libel, claim, answer, allegation, information, letter of request, execution, renunciation, inventory, or other pleading in any admiralty court within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *one shilling*.

9. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which any copy of any such monition, libel, claim, answer, allegation, information, letter of request, execution, renunciation, inventory, or other pleading shall be engrossed, written or printed, a stamp duty of *six pence*.

10. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any appeal, writ of error, writ of dower, *ad quod damnum*, certiorari, statute merchant, statute staple, attestation, or certificate, by any officer, or exemplification of any record or proceeding, in any court whatsoever within the said colonies and plantations, (except appeals, writs of error, certiorari, attestations, certificates, and exemplifications, for, or relating to the removal of any proceedings from before a single justice of the peace,) a stamp duty of *ten shillings*.

11. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any writ of covenant for levying fines, writ of entry for suffering a common recovery, or attachment issuing out of, or returnable into any court within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *five shillings*.

12. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written or printed, any judgment, decree, or sentence, or dismissal, or any record of *nisi prius* or *postea*, in any court within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *four shillings*.

13. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any affidavit, common bail, or appearance, interrogatory, deposition, rule, order or warrant of any court, or any *dedimus potestatem*, *capias subpana*, summons, compulsory citation, commission, recognisance, or any other writ, process, or mandate, issuing out of, or returnable into, any court, or any office belonging thereto, or any other proceeding therein whatsoever, or any copy thereof, or of any record not herein before charged, within the said colonies and plantations, (except warrants relating to criminal matters, and proceedings thereon, or relating thereto) a stamp duty of *one shilling*.

14. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any note or bill of lading, which shall be signed for any kind of goods, wares, or merchandise, to be exported from, or any cocket or clearance granted within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *four pence*.

15. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written or printed, letters of mart or commission for private ships of war, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *twenty shillings*.

16. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any grant, appointment, or admission of or to any public beneficial office or employment, for the space of one year, or any lesser time, of or above *twenty pounds per annum* sterling money, in salary, fees, and perquisites, within the said colonies and plantations, (except commissions and appointments of officers of the army, navy, ordnance, or militia, of judges, and of justices of the peace) a stamp duty of *ten shillings*.

17. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which any grant of any liberty, privilege, or franchise, under the seal or sign manual, of any governor, proprietor, or public officer, alone, or in conjunction with any other person or persons, or with any council, or any council and assembly, or any exemplification of the same, shall be engrossed, written, or printed, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *six pounds*.

18. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any license for retailing of spirituous liquors, to be granted to any person who shall take out the same, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *twenty shillings*.

19. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any license for retailing of wine, to be granted to any person who shall not take out a license for retailing of spirituous liquors, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *four pounds*.

20. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any license for retailing of wine, to be granted to any person who shall take out a license for retailing of spirituous liquors, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *three pounds*.

21. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any probate of will, letters of administration, or of guardianship for any estate above the value of twenty pounds sterling money, within the British colonies and plantations upon the continent of America, the islands belonging thereto, and the Bermuda and Bahama islands, a stamp duty of *five shillings*.

22. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such probate, letters of administration or of guardianship, within all other parts of the British dominions in America, a stamp duty of *ten shillings*.

23. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any bond for securing the payment of any sum of money, not exceeding the sum of ten pounds sterling money, within the British colonies and plantations upon the continent of America, the islands belonging thereto, and the Bermuda and Bahama islands, a stamp duty of *six pence*.

24. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any bond for securing the payment of any sum of money above ten pounds, and not exceeding twenty pounds sterling money, within such colonies, plantations, and islands, a stamp duty of *one shilling*.

25. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any bond for securing the payment of any sum of money above twenty pounds, and not exceeding forty pounds sterling money, within such colonies, plantations, and islands, a stamp duty of *one shilling and six pence*.

26. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any order or warrant for surveying or setting out any quantity of land, not exceeding one hundred acres, issued by any governor, proprietor, or any public officer, alone, or in conjunction with any other person or persons, or with any council, or any council and assembly, within the British colonies and plantations in America, a stamp duty of *six pence*.

27. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such order or warrant for surveying or setting out any quantity of land above one hundred and not exceeding two hundred acres, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *one shilling*.

28. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such order or warrant for surveying or setting out any quantity of land above two hundred and not exceeding three hundred and twenty acres, and in proportion for every such order or warrant for surveying or setting out every other three hundred and twenty acres, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *one shilling and six pence*.

29. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any original grant or any deed, mesne conveyance, or other instrument whatsoever, by which any quantity of land, not exceeding one hundred acres, shall be granted, conveyed, or assigned, within the British colonies and plantations upon the continent of America, the islands belonging thereto, and the Bermuda and Bahama islands (except leases for any term not exceeding the term of twenty-one years) a stamp duty of *one shilling and six pence*.

30. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such original grant, or any such deed, mesne conveyance, or other instrument whatsoever, by which any quantity of land, above one hundred and not exceeding two hundred acres, shall be granted, conveyed, or assigned, within such colonies, plantations and islands, a stamp duty of *two shillings*.

31. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such original grant, or any such deed, mesne conveyance, or other instrument whatsoever, by which any quantity of land, above two hundred, and not exceeding three hundred and twenty acres, shall be granted, conveyed, or assigned, and in proportion for every such grant, deed, mesne conveyance, or other instrument, granting, conveying, or assigning, every other three hundred and twenty acres, within such colonies, plantations and islands, a stamp duty of *two shillings and six pence*.

32. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such original grant, or any such deed, mesne conveyance, or other instrument whatsoever, by which any quantity of land, not exceeding one hundred acres, shall be granted, conveyed, or assigned, within all other parts of the British dominions in America, a stamp duty of *three shillings*.



33. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such original grant, or any such deed, mesne conveyance, or other instrument whatsoever, by which any quantity of land, above one hundred and not exceeding two hundred acres, shall be granted, conveyed, or assigned, within the same parts of the said dominions, a stamp duty of *four shillings*.

34. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such original grant, or any such deed, mesne conveyance, or other instrument whatsoever, by which any quantity of land, above two hundred and not exceeding three hundred and twenty acres, shall be granted, conveyed, or assigned, and in proportion for every such grant, deed, mesne conveyance, or other instrument, granting, conveying, or assigning every other three hundred and twenty acres, within the same parts of the said dominions, a stamp duty of *five shillings*.

35. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written or printed, any grant, appointment, or admission, of or to any beneficial office or employment, not herein before charged, above the value of twenty pounds per annum sterling money, in salary, fees, and perquisites, or any exemplification of the same, within the British colonies and plantations upon the continent of America, the islands belonging thereto, and the Bermuda and Bahama islands, (except commissions of officers of the army, navy, ordnance, or militia, and of justices of the peace) a stamp duty of *four pounds*.

36. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any such grant, appointment, or admission, of or to any such public beneficial office or employment, or any exemplification of the same, within all other parts of the British dominions in America, a stamp duty of *six pounds*.

37. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any indenture, lease, conveyance, contract, stipulation, bill of sale, charter party, protest, articles of apprenticeship or covenant, (except for the hire of servants not apprentices, and also except such other matters as herein before charged) within the British colonies and plantations in America, a stamp duty of *two shillings and six pence*.

38. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which any warrant or order for auditing any public accounts, beneficial warrant, order, grant, or certificate, under any public seal, or under the seal or sign manual of any governor, proprietor, or public officer, alone, or in conjunction with any other person or persons, or with any council, or any council and assembly, not herein before charged, or any passport or letpass, surrender of office, or policy of assurance, shall be engrossed, written, or printed, within the said colonies and plantations, (except warrants or orders for the service of the army, navy, ordnance, or militia, and grants of offices under twenty pounds per annum, in salary, fees, and perquisites) a stamp duty of *five shillings*.

39. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any noctarial act, bond, deed, letter of attorney, procuration, mortgage, release, or other obligatory instrument, not herein before charged, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *two shillings and three pence*.

40. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any register, entry, or enrolment of any grant, deed, or other instrument whatsoever, herein before charged, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *three pence*.

41. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed, any register, entry, or enrolment of any grant, deed, or other instrument whatsoever, not herein before charged, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *two shillings*.

42. And for and upon every pack of playing cards, and all dice, which shall be sold or used within the said colonies and plantations, the several stamp duties following; (that is to say)

43. For every pack of such cards, one shilling.

44. And for every pair of such dice, ten shillings.

45. And for and upon every paper called a *pamphlet*, and upon every newspaper, containing public news, or occurrences, which shall be printed, dispersed, and made public, within any of the said colonies and plantations, and for and upon such advertisements as are hereinafter mentioned, the respective duties following; (that is to say)

46. For every such pamphlet and paper, contained in a half sheet, or any lesser piece of paper, which shall be so printed, a stamp duty of one half-penny for every printed copy thereof.

47. For every such pamphlet and paper, (being larger than half a sheet, and not exceeding one whole sheet) which shall be so printed, a stamp duty of one penny for every printed copy thereof.

48. For every pamphlet and paper, being larger than one whole sheet, and not exceeding six sheets in octavo, or in a lesser page, or not exceeding twelve sheets in quarto, or twenty sheets in folio, which shall be so printed, a duty after the rate of one shilling for every sheet of any kind of paper which shall be contained in one printed copy thereof.

49. For every advertisement to be contained in any gazette, newspaper, or other paper, or any pamphlet which shall be so printed, a duty of two shillings.

50. For every *almanac*, or calendar, for any one particular year, or for any time less than a year, which shall be written or printed on one side only of any one sheet, skin, or piece of paper, parchment, or vellum, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *two pence*.

51. For every other almanac, or calendar, for any one particular year, which shall be written or printed within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of *four pence*.

52. And for every almanac or calendar, written or printed in the said colonies and plantations, to serve for several years, duties to the same amount respectively shall be paid for every such year.

53. For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which any instrument, proceeding, or other matter or thing aforesaid, shall be engrossed, written, or printed, within the said colonies and plantations, in any other than the English language, a stamp duty of double the amount of the respective duties before charged thereon.

54. And there shall be also paid, in the said colonies and plantations, a duty of six pence for every twenty shillings, in any sum not exceeding fifty pounds sterling money, which shall be given, paid, contracted, or agreed for, with or in relation to any clerk or apprentice, which shall be put or placed to or with any master or mistress, to learn any profession, trade, or employment. II. And also a duty of one shilling for every twenty shillings, in any sum exceeding fifty pounds, which shall be given, paid, contracted, or agreed for, with, or in relation to, any such clerk or apprentice.

55. Finally, the produce of all the aforementioned duties shall be paid into his majesty's treasury; and there held in reserve, to be used, from time to time, by the parliament, for the purpose of defraying the expenses necessary for the defence, protection, and security of the said colonies and plantations. [1765. *Statutes at Large*. *Pickering's edition*. 4, 5, *George III. Vol. XXVI. Chap. XII. page 179.*]

## BOOK SECOND.

1765. It is difficult to describe the effervescence excited in America, by the news that the stamp act had been adopted in parliament.

The minister, Grenville, knowing how odious it was to the Americans, and foreseeing the tumults it might cause, had endeavored to mitigate its severity, by strictly avoiding to employ, as collectors of the duty, any individuals born in England; but this precaution proved ineffectual to abate, in the least, the tempest of indignation with which it was received.

The American gazettes began to be filled with complaints of lost liberty; the most influential citizens declared openly, that this was a manifest violation of their rights, which proceeded from no transient error of the English government, but from a deliberate design to reduce the colonies to slavery; 'This,' they exclaimed, 'is but the commencement of a system of the most detestable tyranny.'

Such as opposed the schemes attributed to the government, either to contract a stricter union by a common name, or to render themselves more agreeable to the people, alluding to the words of colonel Barre in his speech before parliament, assumed the specious title of *sons of liberty*. They bound themselves mutually, among other things, to march at their own expense to any part of the continent, where it should be necessary to maintain the English constitution in America, and to use all their efforts to prevent the execution of the stamp act.

A committee of correspondence was organised, to address circular letters to the principal inhabitants of the country; exhorting them to adopt the same principles and the same resolutions. These measures gave a powerful activity to the opposition, and to the tumults which soon followed. The people were prepared for insurrection, the moment an occasion, or a signal, should be given them.

The Virginians, again at this time, were the first to give it. The 29th of May, 1765, the house of burgesses of Virginia, upon the motion of George Johnston and Patrick Henry, came to the following resolutions;

'Whereas the honorable house of commons in England, have of late drawn into question, how far the general assembly of this colony hath power to enact laws for laying taxes and imposing duties, payable by the people of this his majesty's most ancient colony; for settling and ascertaining the same to all future times, the house of burgesses of this present general assembly, have come to the several following resolutions;

'That the first adventurers and settlers of this his majesty's colony and dominion of Virginia, brought with them and transmitted to their



posterity, and all other his majesty's subjects since inhabiting in this his majesty's colony, all the privileges and immunities that have at any time been held, enjoyed and possessed by the people of Great Britain. That by the two royal charters granted by James I., the colonists aforesaid, are declared entitled to all privileges of faithful, liege and natural born subjects, to all intents and purposes, as if they had been abiding and born within the realm of England.

‘That his majesty's liege people of this his most ancient colony, have enjoyed the right of being thus governed by their own assembly, in the article of taxes and internal police, and that the same have never been forfeited, or any other way yielded up, but have been constantly recognised by the king and people of Great Britain.

‘That consequently the general assembly of this colony, together with his majesty, or his substitute, have in their representative capacity the only exclusive right and power to lay taxes and impositions upon the inhabitants of this colony; that every attempt to vest such a power in any person or persons whatsoever other than the general assembly aforesaid, is illegal, unconstitutional, and unjust, and has a manifest tendency to destroy British, as well as American freedom. That his majesty's liege people, the inhabitants of this colony, are not bound to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatsoever, designed to impose any taxation whatsoever upon them, other than the laws and ordinances of this general assembly. That any person who shall by speaking or writing, maintain that any person or persons, other than the general assembly of this colony, have any right or power to impose or lay any taxation whatsoever upon this people, shall be deemed an enemy to this his majesty's colony.’

These resolutions were passed on this day, by an immense majority; but the day following, the assembly being more full, as many of the older and more prudent citizens attended, the subject was reconsidered; and by their influence and representations, the two last articles were retrenched. M. Fauquier, the lieutenant-governor, being informed of these debates, dissolved the assembly; but this measure had little success, for when the new elections took place, those who did not assent to the resolutions were excluded, and all those who did were re-elected. Meanwhile, the resolutions circulated from hand to hand, not as they had been modified, but in their original form.

The members of the confederacy, called the *sons of liberty*, were especially active in communicating them from one to another, and in a short time they were dispersed every where, and every where perused and reperused with equal avidity and enthusiasm.

But in New England, and particularly in the province of Massachusetts, the warm advocates of American privileges were not content with these marks of approbation, but to propagate them the more rapidly among all classes of people, caused them to be printed in the

public journals, which was the principal occasion of the tumults that shortly ensued.

Very early on Wednesday morning the 14th of August, and it is believed at the instigation of John Avery, Thomas Crafts, John Smith, Henry Welles, Thomas Chase, Stephen Cleverling, Henry Bass, and Benjamin Edes, all individuals extremely opposed to the pretensions of England, and zealous partisans of innovation, two effigies were discovered hanging on a branch of an old elm, near the southern entrance of Boston, one of which, according to the label that was attached to it, represented a stamp officer, the other a jack-boot, out of which rose a horned head, which appeared to look around. This spectacle attracted the curious multitude, not only from the city, but as the rumor spread, from all the adjacent country.

As the crowd increased, their minds, already but too much heated, were inspired with a spirit of enthusiasm by this strange exhibition, and the day was immediately devoted to recreation. About dusk, the images were detached from the tree, placed on a bier, and carried in procession with great solemnity. The people followed, stamping, and shouting from all quarters, 'liberty and property forever—no stamp.' Having passed through the town house, they proceeded with their pageantry down King street, and into Kilby street; when arrived in front of a house owned by one Oliver, which they supposed was designed for a stamp office, they halted, and without further ceremony, demolished it to the foundations. Bearing off, as it were in triumph, the wood of the ruined house, with continually increasing shouts and tumult, they proceeded to the dwelling of Oliver himself, and there having beheaded his effigy, broke all his windows in an instant. Continuing to support the two figures in procession, they ascended to the summit of Fort hill, where kindling with their trophies a bonfire, they burnt one of them, amidst peals of universal acclamation. Not satisfied with this, the populace returned to the house of Oliver with clubs and staves; the garden, fences, and all the dependencies of the edifice were destroyed. Oliver had fled, to avoid the popular fury, leaving only a few friends to use their discretion, for the prevention of further damage. But some imprudent words of theirs having exasperated the rage of the multitude, they broke open the doors, entered the lower part of the house, and destroyed the furniture of every description. At midnight they disbanded. The next day, Oliver finding himself thus the object of public detestation, and apprehensive of a second visit, notified the principal citizens that he had written to England, requesting the liberty of being excused from the office of distributor of stamps. In the evening, the people re-assembled, erected a pyramid, intending another bonfire, but upon hearing of Oliver's resignation, they desisted, and repaired to the front of his house, gave three cheers, and took their departure without damage.

Meanwhile, a rumor having got abroad, that Hutchinson, the lieutenant-governor, had written to England in favor of the stamp duties, the multitude immediately repaired to his house, and could not be persuaded to retire till they were assured, that this gentleman had even written to dissuade from the bill. Upon which their cries of rage were followed by shouts of acclamation; they kindled a bonfire, and quietly returned to their respective habitations. But far more serious were the disorders of the 26th of the same month. Some boys were playing around a fire they had kindled in King street; the fire ward coming to extinguish it, he was whispered, by a person unknown, to desist, which he not regarding, received a blow on his arm, and such other marks of displeasure, as obliged him to withdraw. Meanwhile, a particular whistle was heard from several quarters, which was followed by innumerable cries of 'Sirrah! Sirrah!' At this signal advanced a long train of persons disguised, armed with clubs and bludgeons, who proceeded to invest the house of Paxton, marshal of the court of admiralty, and superintendent of the port, who had time to escape; and, at the invitation of the steward,\* the assailants accompanied him to the tavern, were pacified, and the house was spared. But their repeated libations having renewed their frenzy, they sallied forth, and assaulted the house of William Story, register of the vice-admiralty, opposite the court-house, the lower part of which, being his office, they broke open, seized and committed to the flames the files and public records of that court, and then destroyed the furniture of the house. Nor did the riot end here. The mob, continually increasing in numbers and intoxication, stimulated by the havoc already committed, rushed onwards to the house of Benjamin Hallowell, collector of the customs, the furniture of which they soon destroyed. They renewed their potations, in the cellar; and what they were unable to drink, they wasted; they searched every corner, and carried off about thirty pounds sterling in money. They are joined by fresh bands. In a state bordering on madness, they proceed to the residence of Hutchinson, the lieutenant-governor, about ten o'clock at night; they invest it, and employ every means to enter it by violence. After having sent his children, as yet of tender age, to a place of safety, he barricaded his doors and windows, and seemed determined to remain; but, unable to resist the fury of the assailants, he was constrained to quit the place, and take refuge in another house, where he remained concealed till four in the morning. Meantime, his mansion, perhaps the most magnificent and the best furnished house in the colony, was devoted to ruin and pillage. The plate, the pictures, the furniture of every kind, even to the apparel of the governor, were carried off,

\* Paxton was only a tenant; the owner of the house, T. Palmer, Esq., gave the entertainment.



besides nine hundred pounds sterling in specie. Not content with this, they dispersed or destroyed all the manuscripts which the governor had been thirty years in collecting, as well as papers, relating to the public service, deposited in his house ; an immense, and irreparable loss.

It appears that Hutchinson had become the object of a hatred so universal, because he was accused of having been accessary in laying on the stamp duties ; which imputation, however, was absolutely false ; for it is ascertained, on the contrary, that he had always opposed that measure, in his letters to the government. Hence it is seen how erroneous are often popular opinions ; and that those who govern should propose to themselves a nobler object, in the performance of their duty, than that of pleasing the multitude, who are more often found to fawn upon their oppressors, than to applaud their benefactors.

The next morning was the time for holding the assize and the supreme court of judicature. Hutchinson, who was its president, was obliged to appear on the bench in the dress of a private citizen, while the other judges, and the gentlemen of the bar, were in their respective robes. This contrast was observed with grief and pity by the spectators. The court, to evince with what indignation they received the affront they had sustained in the person of their president, and how much they detested the scenes of anarchy which the preceding day had witnessed, resolved to abstain from all exercise of their functions, and adjourned to the 15th of October.

Some individuals, who had been apprehended, refusing to denounce the authors of the tumult, were committed to prison ; but one of them effected his escape, and the rest were released soon after ; for it was seen distinctly, that the people were not disposed to tolerate any further proceedings against the delinquents.

Meanwhile, the principal citizens, either from a real detestation of the excesses committed by the rioters, or perceiving that such outrages must infallibly injure a cause they considered just, were very strenuous to distinguish this tumultuous conduct from a truly noble opposition, as they called it, to the imposition of internal taxes by authority of parliament. They assembled, in consequence, at Faneuil Hall, a place destined for public meetings, in order to declare solemnly how much they abhorred the extraordinary and violent proceedings of unknown persons, the preceding night ; and voted, unanimously, that the selectmen and magistrates of the city be desired to use their utmost endeavors, agreeable to law, to suppress such disorders for the future ; and that the freeholders and other inhabitants, would do every thing in their power to assist them therein.

The next day, a proclamation was published by the governor, offering a reward of three hundred pounds for the discovery of any of the ringleaders, and one hundred pounds for any of the other per-

sons concerned in that tumult. The tranquillity of the city was restored, and preserved by a nightly military watch.

But the disorders were not confined to the limits of the city of Boston, or the province of Massachusetts. They also broke out in many other places, and almost at the same time; which renders it probable that they had been previously concerted between the inhabitants of the different provinces. On Tuesday, the 27th of August, about nine o'clock in the morning, the people of Newport, in Rhode Island, began to manifest their agitation, by bringing forth, in a cart, three images, intended as the effigies of Martin Howard, Thomas Moffatt, and Augustin Johnston, with halters about their necks, to a gallows placed near the town-house, where they were hung to public view, till near night, when they were cut down, and burnt, amidst the acclamations of the multitude.

The following day, having probably received the news of what had taken place in Boston, they assembled again, and beset the house of Martin Howard, a celebrated advocate, who had written with great zeal in favor of the rights of parliament. All was plundered or destroyed, except the walls. Thomas Moffatt, a physician, maintained the same opinions, in all societies; his house was pillaged, also, in a moment. Both fled, and took shelter on board an English ship of war, at anchor in the port; and soon after, believing it no longer safe to remain in the country, departed for Great Britain. The populace proceeded towards the house of Johnston, prepared to commit the same disorders; but were met, and parleyed with, by a gentleman, who persuaded them to desist and disperse.

At Providence, the principal city of Rhode Island, a gazette extraordinary was published, on the 24th of August, with 'VOX POPULI, VOX DEI,' in large letters, for the frontispiece; and underneath, 'Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. St. Paul.' It congratulated the people of New England, on the glorious accounts, from all parts, of the laudable commotions of the people in the cause of liberty; and on the lawful measures adopted to prevent the execution of the stamp act, not hesitating to treat as such these blameable excesses of the populace. The writers extolled to the skies the zeal of the Bostonians, who, they said, had not degenerated from their fathers, but had preserved entire that spirit of freedom which had already rendered them so celebrated throughout the world. Pasquinades, farces, satires, and popular railleries were not spared, in the public prints. The effigies of such as were the objects of popular displeasure, were dragged, with halters about their necks, through the streets, hung to gibbets, and afterwards burnt.

In Connecticut, Ingersoll, the principal stamp officer, having appointed for his deputy an inhabitant of Wyndham, wrote him to come and receive his commission at New Haven. The inhabitants of Wyndham, on hearing of this, demanded the letter of Ingersoll, and

warned him not to accept the office ; which, preferring the less evil, he consented to renounce. Ingersoll himself was reduced to the same extremity, at New Haven. He wrote a letter, which was afterwards published, in which he declared, that since the inhabitants had such an aversion to stamped paper, he would not compel them to use it. He hoped, however, that if they should change their minds on further consideration, or from a conviction of necessity, they would receive it from him. This declaration was much applauded ; but the people having conceived new suspicions of his sincerity, they surrounded his house, and he was informed that he must decide immediately, either for or against the resignation of his office. He answered, that this choice was not in his power. They next demanded, whether, when the stamped paper arrived, he would deliver it to them, to make a bonfire ? Or—have his house pulled down ? He then replied, and with evident reluctance, that when the stamps arrived he would either reship them to be sent back ; or when they were in his house, he would leave his doors open, that they might then act as they thought proper.

Similar tumults also took place in the town of Norwich, and that of Lebanon ; but in the latter, the ceremony of a mock trial was added, by which the effigies were condemned, in due form, to be hung and burnt.

The next morning the same scenes were repeated, with the exception of the trial ; but the deputy collector of the stamp duty had already resigned.

In New Hampshire, Messerve, another stamp officer, was compelled by the multitude to renounce the exercise of his functions. In Maryland, Flood, principal distributor of stamped paper, was menaced in his property if he refused to resign ; he fled for refuge first to New York, and afterwards to Long Island. But the multitude having unexpectedly crossed the strait, constrained him not only to renounce his employment, but to confirm his resignation upon oath, before a magistrate.

At New York, the stamp act was held in such contempt, that it was printed and cried through the country as the *Folly of England and Ruin of America*. The stamp officers in this quarter perceived they could not resign too promptly. Similar scenes took place in the other American provinces.

To foment the general excitement, and encourage the people to persevere in the opposition commenced, their leaders took care to multiply satirical pamphlets and pasquinades ; epigrams and popular jests were incessant in the public prints. At Boston, among others, a newspaper was published, under the following title ; ‘The Constitutional Courant ; containing matters interesting to Liberty, and no wise repugnant to Loyalty.’ The frontispiece represented a serpent, cut into eight pieces ; on the part of the head, were the initial letters of



New England ; and on that of the body, the initials of the other colonies, as far as South Carolina ; and over it 'JOIN OR DIE,' in large letters.

In many places, the advocates, attornies and notaries, held meetings, in which the query was proposed, Whether, when the stamps should arrive, and the day prefixed for using them, they would agree to purchase stamped paper for their legal writings ? The negative was decided unanimously : they protested, however, in strong terms, against all riotous and indecent behavior, and pledged themselves to discountenance it, by every means in their power ; their sole intention being, by the refusal of the stamps, and other quiet methods, to endeavor to procure the repeal of the law.

The justices of the peace for the district of Westmoreland, in Virginia, published, that, on account of the stamp act, they had discontinued their functions ; unwilling, they said, to become instruments of the destruction of the most essential rights, and of the liberty of their country.

Thus, while the frantic populace rushed headlong into the most odious excesses, men of reputation only testified their resistance by moderate acts, but not less, and perhaps even more, efficacious, to obtain the repeal of a law they abhorred, and to re-establish American liberty. Thus, the spirit of independence, originating at first in Virginia and Massachusetts, was progressively propagated in the other provinces ; and passed from the populace to the middle classes, and from these to the most eminent citizens.

Meanwhile, the time drew nigh, when the stamped paper destined for America was expected to arrive from England ; and the day was no longer distant, when, by the terms of the law, the stamp act was to go into effect : it was the first of November.

The Americans already viewed it as a day of sinister presage, and the harbinger of future calamities to their country. On the 5th of October, the ships which brought the stamps, appeared in sight of Philadelphia, near Gloucester Point. Immediately, all the vessels in the harbor hoisted their colors half-staff high ; the bells were muffled ; and tolled for the rest of the day ; and every thing appeared to denote the most profound and universal mourning. At four in the afternoon, several thousands of citizens met at the State-House, to consult on proper measures to prevent the execution of the stamp act. Upon the motion of William Allen, son of the president of the court of justice, it was agreed to send a deputation to John Hughes, principal officer of the stamps for the province, to request he would resign his office ; to which, after long resistance, and with extreme reluctance, he at length consented.

The tumult continued many days ; during which Hughes was active in barricading his house, and securing the succours of his friends, apprehensive, notwithstanding his resignation, of being attacked every

moment. Amidst this general effervescence, the quakers, who are very numerous in Philadelphia, maintained a perfect calm, and appeared disposed to submit to the stamp act. The same also was the conduct of the Episcopal clergy ; but they were few in number.

The stamped paper arrived at Boston the 10th of September. The governor immediately wrote to the assembly of representatives, requesting their advice, Oliver having resigned his office. The assembly replied, that this affair was not within their competency ; and therefore the governor, they hoped, would excuse them, if they could not see their way clear, to give him either advice or assistance. The representatives thus avoided the snare, and left the governor alone, to extricate himself as he could. He finally caused the bales of stamped paper to be lodged in the castle, where they could be defended, if necessary, by the artillery.

But on the first of November, at dawn of day, all the bells of Boston sounded the funeral knell. Two figures, of immense proportions, were found suspended on the elm, of which we have spoken before. This tree, since the date of the first tumults, had acquired the name of 'the tree of liberty.' Under its shade the patriots assembled to confer upon their affairs ; and thence arose the custom of planting, in every town, or naming those already planted, trees of liberty. The Bostonians poured into the streets in throngs, and all was uproar. At three in the afternoon, the two effigies were detached from the tree, in the midst of universal acclamations, carried round the city, hung to a gallows, and afterwards cut in pieces, and thrown to the winds. This executed, the people withdrew to their habitations, and tranquillity seemed re-established. But the agitators, soon after, proceeded to a highly blameable excess. Oliver, who had long since resigned his employment, was dragged with violence to the foot of the tree of liberty, through the tumultuous crowd, and there compelled, a second time, to renounce upon oath ; as if any importance could be attached to these oaths, extorted by coercion ! They attest the tyranny of those who exact them, not the will of him that takes them.

In many places, over the doors of the public offices, was seen this inscription : 'Let him that shall first distribute or employ stamped paper, look well to his house, his person, and his furniture. Vox POPULI.' The people went armed ; the friends of stamps were intimidated.

Nor less serious were the disorders in the city of New York. The stamped paper arrived there, about the last of October. Mac Ever, who had been appointed distributor, having resigned the office, the lieutenant-governor, Colden, a person little agreeable to the multitude, on account of his political opinions, caused the paper to be lodged in fort George ; and having taken some precautions for its security, the people began to suspect some sinister intention on his part.

In consequence, on the 1st of November, towards evening, the populace assembled in great numbers, and rushed furiously to the citadel. The governor's stables were forced, his coach taken out, and drawn in triumph through the principal streets of the city. A gallows having been erected in the grand square, the effigy of the lieutenant-governor was there hung, with a sheet of stamped paper in the right hand, and the figure of a demon in the left. It was afterwards taken down, and carried in procession, the coach in the van, to the gates of the fortress, and finally to the counterscarp, under the very mouths of the cannon, where they made a grand bonfire of the whole, amidst the shouts and general exultation of many thousands of people. But this irritated multitude did not stop here. They soon repaired to the residence of major James. It was distinguished for its rich furniture, a library of great value, and a garden of singular beauty. In a moment all was ravaged and destroyed. They kindled also the accustomed bonfire; exclaiming, Such are the entertainments the people bestow on the friends of stamps!

The coffee-houses had become a species of public arena, and schools for political doctrines, where the popular orators, mounting the benches or tables, harangued the multitude, who commonly resorted to these places in great numbers. In a very crowded concourse of this sort, an honest citizen of New York arose and exhorted the people to a more regular and less blameable conduct. He entreated the inhabitants even to take arms, in order to be prepared to repress the factious on the first symptoms of tumult. His discourse was received with great approbation. But captain Isaac Sears, who had commanded a privateer, and was violently opposed to the stamps, urged the people not to give ear to these timid men, who take alarm at cobwebs; let them follow him, and he would soon put them in possession of the stamped paper.

He is joined at first by a few popular chiefs; all the rest follow their example. A deputation is sent to the lieutenant-governor, to inform him that he will do well to deliver up the stamped paper. He endeavored at first to gain time, alleging that the governor, Henry Moore, was expected shortly, and would determine what was proper in this conjuncture. The answer was by no means satisfactory. It was represented more imperiously to the lieutenant-governor, that peaceably or by force, the people must have the stamped paper; and that a moment's delay might cause the effusion of blood. To avoid, therefore, a greater evil, he consented to put it in their hands; and they, with great exultation, deposited the same in the City-Hall. Ten bales, however, which arrived afterwards, were seized by the populace and burnt.

Notwithstanding all the disorders committed in New York by the lower classes, citizens of a more quiet character abounded in this city; who, if, on the one hand, they were averse to the pretensions



of the British parliament, and especially to the stamp act, on the other, felt an equal abhorrence for these excesses of popular insolence ; well knowing, that they are only excited by the worthless and desperate, who alone can be gainers by anarchy. Believing, therefore, it was no longer advisable to leave the headlong multitude without a check, but, on the contrary, that it was essential to direct their movements towards the object proposed by themselves, they convoked a general meeting of the people, in the fields adjacent to the city. It was there proposed to appoint a committee of persons of known patriotism, to correspond with the friends of liberty in other provinces, and communicate intelligence of all occurrences ; in order to enable the people of the different provinces to move, if requisite, all at once, and as it were in a single body. This measure, however, was not without danger, since it inclined towards an open rebellion, if not even already of this character.

Many, therefore, who had been nominated members of the committee excused themselves upon various pretexts ; but finally, Isaac Sears and four others of distinguished intrepidity, offered themselves, and were approved by the multitude. They commenced their labors immediately, subscribing the letters with all their names. They requested their correspondents of Philadelphia, to transmit their despatches to the more southern colonies ; and the Bostonians, to those of the north. This produced, as it were, a second generation of the Sons of Liberty, who, by means of regular couriers, were enabled to reciprocate intelligence, and to form a league in opposition to parliamentary taxation. But if the utility of a regular correspondence was recognised by all the party, they were not long in perceiving that it was insufficient to accomplish their views. They saw that it was requisite to determine all the principles of the association, and cause them to be accepted by all its members, in order that each might know his duty, and the counsels to be pursued. The authors of this plan believed, also, that as the articles of confederation were to be solemnly subscribed, many even of the adverse party would not dare to oppose it, and would therefore give their signatures : they would thus have been rendered accessaries, and their future support consequently secured. The articles were soon drawn up, and accepted by the Sons of Liberty in the two provinces of New York and Connecticut : and afterwards, passing from hand to hand, by those of the other colonies.

In the preamble to this league, which was composed very ably, the confederates affirmed, that perverse men had formed a design to alienate the minds of the loyal and affectionate American subjects from his majesty's person and government, and therefore they professed and declared their fidelity and allegiance to the king to be immutable ; that they would defend and support the crown with all their forces ; that with the greatest promptitude they submitted to

its government, and this in conformity to the British constitution, founded upon the eternal principles of equity and justice ; that every violation of this constitution was at the same time a high offence against heaven, and an audacious contempt of the people, from whom, under God, all just government proceeds ; that they were therefore resolved to unite all their endeavors, their vigilance and their industry, to defeat these criminal designs. ‘And since,’ they added, ‘*a certain pamphlet*, (thus designating a law passed by the parliament of Great Britain,) has appeared in America, under the form of an act of parliament, and under the name of the stamp act, although it has not been legally published nor introduced ; by which the colonists would be divested of their dearest rights, and especially that of taxing themselves ; in order to preserve these rights entire, and to defend them as well as every other part of the British constitution, we bind ourselves, and promise to march with all our forces, and at our own expense, upon the first advice, to the succour of those who shall be menaced with any peril whatever, on account of any thing done in opposition to the stamp act. We will attentively watch all those, who, by commission or of their own accord, shall endeavor to introduce the use of stamped paper, which would be the total subversion of the English constitution, and of American liberty. We will reciprocally designate to each other all persons of this sort that we may discover, whatever shall be their rank or their names, and will endeavor, with all our power, by every lawful means, to bring these traitors to their country to condign punishment. We will defend the liberty of the press from all illegal violation, and from every impediment which may result from the stamp act ; the press being the only means, under Divine Providence, of preserving our lives, liberty, and property. We will also defend and protect the judges, advocates, attornies, notaries, and similar persons, against all penalties, fines or vexations, they may incur by not conforming to the act aforesaid, in the exercise of their respective avocations.’

Such was the league of New York, which increased the ardor and concert of the parties, then fermenting at every point of the American colonies.

Meanwhile, the seeds of the new doctrine, in respect to government, were rapidly propagated in the province of New York ; the public journals offered them to the daily consideration of their readers. It was every where asserted, that the colonies ought not to have any other connexion with Great Britain but that of living under the same sovereign ; and that all dependence ought to cease, as to legislative authority.

These opinions, supported with equal ardor and ingenuity, were daily acquiring new roots ; they were disseminated in the other colonies, and insensibly prepared the minds of the people for the new order of things, towards which the multitude advanced without sus-

pecting it, but its leaders, with deliberate purpose. A revolution, for which England, with quite opposite views, had herself paved the way, and prepared the most favorable circumstances.

The merchants of New York resorted to another mode of opposition, very efficacious, and well adapted to obtain the repeal of the act. They entered into reciprocal agreements, not only to order no more goods from Great Britain, until the act was repealed, and to withdraw all the orders already given, and which should not be executed previous to the 1st of January, 1766, but also, not even to permit the sale of any English merchandise, which should be shipped after this date. According to the ordinary progress of minds once agitated, which become continually more bold in their opinions, the merchants added, that they would persevere in these resolutions, until the acts relative to sugar, molasses, and bills of credit, were also revoked. The same resolutions were voluntarily adopted also by the retail traders, who agreed not to buy or sell any English merchandise, that should be introduced into the country in contravention of these stipulations.

The merchants and traders of Philadelphia also assembled, and entered into an agreement; but not with the same unanimity. The Quakers refused their concurrence. They thought it was prudent, however, to conform to circumstances; and wrote to England, requesting that no more goods might be sent them. The Philadelphians went still further, and prohibited any lawyer from instituting an action for monies due to an inhabitant of England; and no American was to make any payment for the benefit of a subject of that kingdom, until the acts should be repealed. At Boston, although a little later, similar associations were formed; and the example of these principal cities was imitated by nearly all the other cities and commercial towns of English America.

From these measures, England experienced, in her manufactures, an incalculable prejudice; while Ireland, on the contrary, derived an immense advantage from their effects; for the Americans resorted to the latter country, to obtain such articles of merchandise as they considered indispensably necessary, and carried, in exchange, immense quantities of the seed of flax and of hemp. But the colonists were desirous also to withdraw themselves from this necessity. A society of arts, manufactures and commerce, was formed at New York, after the model of that in London. Markets were opened, in different places, for the sale of articles manufactured in the country; to which were brought, in abundance, cloths and linens, stuffs of wool and of flax, works in iron, of a tolerable quality, though a little rough, spirits distilled from barley, paper stained for hangings, and other articles of general utility. That the first materials of fabrics in wool might sustain no diminution, it was resolved to abstain from eating the flesh of lambs, and also from buying meat, of any sort, of butchers who should kill or offer for sale any of these animals.



Every citizen, even the most opulent, the most ostentatious, conforming to the general mode, preferred to wear clothing made in the country, or their old clothes, to using English manufactures. Thus a general opinion obtained, that America could suffice to herself, without need of recourse to the industry and productions of England. And, as if these wounds, inflicted upon the commerce of the mother country, were not sufficiently severe, it was proposed, in Virginia and South Carolina, to suspend all exportation of tobacco to any part of Great Britain; from which the latter must have sustained a very serious detriment, not only by the diminution of public revenue, consequent to that of the duties upon importation, but by the diminution of commerce itself; for the English supplied foreign markets with great quantities of these tobaccos.

On the first of November, the day prefixed by the law for the emission of stamped paper, not a single sheet of it could have been found in all the colonies of New England, of New York, of New Jersey, of Pennsylvania, of Maryland, and of the two Carolinas. It had either been committed to the flames during the popular commotions, or sent back to England, or fallen into the hands of the party in opposition, who guarded it carefully. Hence originated a sudden suspension, or rather a total cessation, of all business that could not be transacted without stamped paper. The printers of newspapers only continued their occupation; alleging for excuse, that if they had done otherwise, the people would have given them such admonitions as they little coveted. None would receive the gazettes coming from Canada, as they were printed upon stamped paper. The courts of justice were closed; the ports were shut; even marriages, were no longer celebrated; and in a word, an absolute stagnation in all the relations of social life was established.

The governors of the provinces, though bound by their oaths, and the severest penalties, to cause the stamp act to be executed, considering, on the one hand, the obstinacy of the Americans, and, on the other, the impossibility of finding any stamped paper, in the greater part of the towns, considering also the incalculable detriment that must result, as well to the public as to individuals, from a total stagnation of all civil transactions, resolved to grant letters of dispensation to such as requested them, and particularly to ships about to sail from the ports; for the captains, without this precaution, would have been liable to heavy penalties, in other ports of the British dominions, for not having conformed to the stamp act. The lieutenant-governor of South Carolina, the governor being absent, alone obstinately persisted in exacting a strict execution of the law, and never consented to grant dispensations. Nor is it easy to conceive how great was the damage sustained, in all civil transactions, by the inhabitants of this opulent colony, in consequence of the obstinacy shown by the two parties.

But the province of Massachusetts, the most populous of all, and that in which the opposition to the designs of England was the most determined and the most universal, took another resolution, of extreme importance, which was soon adopted by all the others. The leading patriots of Massachusetts reflected that popular commotions are commonly of little duration ; and that governments, to preserve their dignity, are more disposed to punish their authors, than to remove their causes ; and consequently, that both reasons of state, and the wounded pride of those they had braved, would be united against them. They reflected, also, that the regular correspondence established between the Sons of Liberty in the different provinces, although of great importance to diffuse and uphold a common opinion, was still but a correspondence of private men, acting by no public authority ; and that, although the assemblies of representatives of each province, had opposed the late laws by suitable deliberations, yet these acts were but the remonstrances of particular provinces, which did not represent the entire united body of the English colonies. They resolved, therefore, to take measures preliminary to the formation of a general congress, to which each of the provinces should send its deputies, for the purpose of concluding a general and public confederacy against the laws of which America complained. They hoped that England would pay more regard to the opposition and remonstrances of such a body than to those of private individuals, or of the provincial assemblies, separated one from another. Perhaps they also hoped, as they probably already meditated the design of independence, that, by means of this congress, the colonies would become accustomed to act in concert, and consider themselves as a single and united nation. The first authors of this deliberation were the Otises, father and son, and James Warren, who took a more active part than others in affairs of this nature.

The proposition having been submitted to the house of assembly, it was immediately adopted, by passing a resolution, that it was highly expedient to form a congress without delay, to be composed of all the deputies that should be sent by the houses of representatives or burgesses of the different colonies, to consult together respecting the present occurrences, and to form and transmit to England, the remonstrances which might be deemed proper. It was decided, that this congress should be convoked in the city of New York, on the first Tuesday of October.

This was the first general congress held in the colonies, since the commencement of the tumults ; it served as a model to the other, which governed the affairs of America during the course of the war which broke out some time after. The other colonies addressed their acknowledgments to the province of Massachusetts, for its zeal in the common cause ; and sent their deputies to the congress of New York. A memorable example ! The same councils which

tended to establish a law by the divisions supposed to have resulted from the conflict of interests, produced, on the contrary, an universal combination against this law; and where it was expected to find general obedience, an unanimous resistance was encountered. A manifest proof, that where no powerful armies exist, to constrain the opinion of the people, all attempts to oppose it, are fraught with danger. The rulers of free states ought to show themselves their administrators, rather than masters; they should be capable of guiding, without frequent use of the curb, or of the spur.

On Monday, the 7th of October, 1765, the delegates of the American provinces convened in the city of New York. The ballot being taken, and the votes examined, Timothy Ruggles was elected president. The congress, after a long preamble, full of the ordinary protestations of affection and loyalty towards the person of the king, and the English government, inserted a series of fourteen articles, which were but a confirmation of the rights claimed by the Americans, both as men and as subjects of the British crown, of which we have already made frequent mention; concluding with complaints of the restraints and impediments to their commerce, created by the late laws.

They afterwards drew up three petitions, or remonstrances, addressed to the king, to the lords in parliament, and to the house of commons. They enlarged upon the merits of the Americans, in having converted vast deserts, and uncultivated lands, into populous cities and fertile fields; inhospitable shores into safe and commodious ports; tribes of ignorant and inhuman savages, into civilised and sociable nations, to whom they had communicated the knowledge of things, divine and human; and thus had greatly advanced the glory, power, and prosperity of the British nation.

‘We have always enjoyed,’ they said, ‘the privileges of English subjects; to these we are indebted for the happy life we have led for so long a time. We cannot, we ought not, to renounce them; none has the right to tax us but ourselves. We have been aggrieved and injured, beyond measure, by the late commercial restrictions; but especially by the new and extraordinary act for imposing stamp duties. The peculiar circumstances of the colonies render it impossible to pay these duties; and, though it were possible, the payment would soon drain them of all their specie. The execution of these laws would, by reaction, become extremely detrimental to the commercial interest of Great Britain. The colonies owe an immensely heavy debt, as well to England for British manufactures, as to their own inhabitants, for advances made by them, for the public service, in the late war. It is evident, the more the commerce of the colonies is favored, the more also that of England is promoted and increased. In such a country as America, where the lands are extremely divided, and transfers of property very frequent, where a



multiplicity of transactions take place every day, the stamp act is not only vexatious, but altogether insupportable ; the house of commons cannot, at so great a distance, be acquainted with our wants or with our faculties ; every one knows the distinction between the jurisdiction of parliament, in regulating the affairs of commerce in all parts of the empire, and colonial taxation ; for the latter object, the provincial assemblies have been expressly instituted in the colonies, which would become altogether useless, if the parliament should arrogate the right of imposing taxes ; the colonists have never obstructed, but have always promoted to the extent of their power, the interests of the crown ; they bear a filial affection towards the government and people of England ; they love their opinions, their manners, their customs, they cherish the ancient relations, which unite them ; they hope, therefore, that their humble representations will be heard ; that their deplorable situation will be taken into a just consideration ; that the acts which have oppressed their commerce and their property, with such grievances, will be repealed, or that the British government will otherwise relieve the American people, as in its wisdom and goodness shall seem meet.'

But, as if they feared being called to participate in the general representation in parliament, by sending their delegates also, they inserted in their petitions, an assertion entirely new, which was, that considering the remote situation, and other circumstances of the colonies, it would be impracticable that they should be otherwise represented, than by their provincial assemblies. Another of their complaints was directed against the clauses of the late laws, by which the penalties and forfeitures, that might be incurred by the violation of the late regulations, and of the stamp act, were not to be decided as in England, by the ordinary tribunals, but, at the election of the informer, by one of the courts of admiralty. Thus, they affirmed, at the good pleasure of the first suborner, they were liable to be carried, for trial, from one end of the continent to the other ; while at the same time, they would be deprived of the right, so dear to all, of being tried by a jury ; their fortunes, their characters, would be in the hands of a single judge.

The 24th of October, it was determined by congress, that the petitions should be preferred in England, with the requisite solicitations, by special agents, to be appointed for this purpose by the several provinces, and indemnified for all their expenses. The day following, having accomplished the objects for which it was convened, the congress dissolved itself.

The news of the disturbances excited in America, by the stamp act, being arrived in England, the minds of all were deeply but differently affected, according to their various opinions and interests.

The merchants, foreseeing that the sums they had lent the Americans could not be reimbursed, censured, and detested the extraordi-

nary law which had interrupted the ancient course of things. The greater part of them did not blame, but even appeared to approve the resolution taken by the Americans, to discontinue all remittances to England, persuaded that the new duties had deprived them of the means. The manufacturers, finding their orders diminished, and their business rapidly declining, were reduced to the greatest straits, and many to ruin. Some abandoned themselves to dejection and despondency, others manifested a lofty indignation at the excesses committed by the Americans. Disputations and controversies, were without number. Pamphlets were daily published, written upon different, and even opposite principles. In some, the Americans were extravagantly extolled, and praised as the defenders of liberty, the destroyers of tyranny, the protectors and supporters of all that is dear to man upon earth; in others, they were acrimoniously accused of ingratitude, avarice, turbulence, suspicion, and finally, of rebellion.

Those who in parliament, or elsewhere, had promoted the late laws, were disposed to employ force, and constrain the obedience of the Americans at all hazards; and to inflict condign punishment upon the authors of such enormities. Those, on the contrary, who had opposed the act, declared for more lenient measures; they affirmed, that all other means should be tried before resorting to force; that an attempt should first be made to sooth the minds of the colonists, as it was never too late to employ coercion; that the signal of civil war once given, the first blood once shed, it was impossible to foresee the consequences, or the termination of the contest.

It was believed, at the time, that lord Bute, who had the king's entire confidence, and, concealed behind the scenes, was the prompter of all, had strongly advised to trample down all obstacles, and to use the promptest means to subdue all opposition. The gentlemen of the royal household, who in their ambrosial life are ignorant of human miseries, would have winged the despatches to America with fire and sword. The members of the Episcopal clergy itself, forgetting the clemency of their character, professed the same sentiments; perhaps they already imagined that the Americans, being reduced to submission, and the petulance, as they said, of their spirits brought under the curb, to prevent the return of similar disorders, it would be determined to introduce in the colonies, the English hierarchy. It was also known that the king was inclined to enforce the execution of the stamp act, but that if this could not be effected without bloodshed, he wished its repeal.

Meanwhile, the ministry, who had been the authors of the restraints imposed on American commerce, and of the stamp act, had received their dismissal. In appearance, and perhaps in reality, this change took place on account of the coldness with which they had proposed and supported the regency bill, before the two houses of parliament; such at least was the general opinion; but it is not improbable that

it was occasioned by the alarming commotions raised in England by the silk-weavers, who complained of the declension of their manufacture. The cause of which was imputed, by some, to the introduction of an unusual quantity of foreign silks, and particularly those of France; but, the real or principal cause, was the diminution of purchases for American account. Perhaps also, the government already suspected, or was apprised of the tumults in America. But it was given out and circulated with much industry, that the change of ministry ought to be attributed solely to the statute of regency. The government thus sheltered itself from the blame incurred by the new direction given to the affairs of America, and left the people at liberty to throw it upon the late ministry. For it is a salutary principle of the English constitution, that when in consequence of a false or unfortunate measure, the state is menaced with serious dangers, (as this measure could not, however, be renounced without prejudice to the dignity of government) some occasion of a nature quite foreign, is eagerly sought as a pretext for dismissing the ministers. Then, without other accusation, the censure attaches to them; the affair is again brought under deliberation, and the plan of conduct is entirely changed. Thus it is seen, that what, in other governments, where the sovereign is absolute, could only be obtained by his abdication, or otherwise would expose the state to the most disastrous events, and perhaps total ruin, is easily obtained in England, by a simple change of ministers. In this manner the wishes of the nation are gratified without impairing the dignity of the throne, or the security of the state. But, as in all human things evil is always mingled with good, this procedure has also its inconveniences, and the new ministers are placed in a situation full of embarrassment; for to march in a direction altogether opposite to that of their predecessors, would be giving a complete triumph to the factious, to insurgents, to enemies, domestic or foreign, and would tend to animate them with new audacity. On the other hand, to follow tamely the same track, would be continuing in evil, and doing precisely that which it is desired to avoid. It happens, therefore, too often, that the new ministers are obliged to pursue a certain middle course, which rarely leads to any desirable end. A remarkable example of which, is exhibited in the history of the events we retrace.

The marquis of Rockingham, one of the wealthiest noblemen of the kingdom, and much esteemed by all for the vigor of his genius, and especially for the sincerity of his character, was appointed first lord of the treasury, in the room of George Grenville, the other departments of the ministry passed from the friends of the latter to the friends of the former. The greater part were, or at least professed to be, friendly to the American cause. One of them, general Conway, had been appointed secretary of state for the colonies; and no choice could have been more agreeable to the Americans.



The new ministers soon turned their attention to the state of the colonies, which they resolved to meliorate, by procuring the abrogation of the laws which had caused such bitter complaints, and particularly of the stamp act. But this they could not do at present, without a great prejudice to the dignity of government; it was also necessary to wait for the regular meeting of parliament, which is usually convened at the close of the year; finally, it was requisite to take, at least in appearance, sufficient time to acquaint themselves thoroughly with the state of affairs in America, and to weigh them with much deliberation, in order to lay them before parliament with all due precision and illustrations. They endeavored, in the mean time, to sooth the minds of the Americans, and bring them back to reason, by pruning from the odious acts all the conditions that could be removed by an extreme laxity of interpretation; by speaking in their correspondence with the governors of the colonies, with great indulgence of the American disturbances; and by encouraging the colonists themselves to hope that their grievances would be redressed.

The board of treasury decided that all the produce of the American stamp duties should be paid, from time to time, to the deputy paymaster in America, to defray the subsistence of the troops, and any military expenses incurred in the colonies.

The members of the board of trade, having taken into consideration the energetic resolutions of the assembly of Virginia, were urgent in their representations to the king, that he should notice them, by a declaration of the royal disapprobation, and send instructions to the agents of the crown in Virginia, to enforce the strict execution of the stamp act, and all other laws proceeding from the legitimate authority of parliament. But all this was but a vain demonstration, for they well knew that their opinion would not be approved by the king's privy council. In effect, the council decided that the present matter could not be determined by the king in his privy council, but was within the competency of parliament.

The resolutions of the other colonial assemblies having been denounced to the king, the privy council made the same answer in respect to them. Thus it was apparent, that a disposition existed to discourage all deliberations directed against America.

The secretary of state, Conway, found himself in a very difficult situation. He could not but condemn the excesses to which the Americans had abandoned themselves; but, on the other hand, he detested the thought of procuring, by force, the execution of a law which had been the cause of such commotions, and was considered by the new ministers, and by himself, perhaps, more than any other, if not unjust, certainly at least, unseasonable and prejudicial. He, therefore, had recourse to temporising and subterfuges; and displayed in all his conduct a surprising address.

In the letters addressed to the lieutenant-governor of Virginia, and to the other colonial governors, he expressed a full persuasion of the attachment of the mass of the Virginians to the mother country; that the violent proceedings of some among them, had in no degree diminished the confidence his majesty had always placed in his good colony of Virginia; that neither the crown nor its servants had any intention to violate the real rights and liberties of any part of his majesty's dominions; that, on the other hand, the government would never endure that the dignity of parliament should be made a sacrifice to certain local and anticipated opinions. He therefore exhorted the governors to maintain, with all their power, but by all prudent measures, the just rights of the British government, (without, however, explaining what rights were intended.) He recommended to them, especially, to preserve the peace and tranquillity of the provinces committed to their care; then, advertng to the violences and outrages which had taken place in the colonies, he did not hesitate to attribute them to the lowest of the population, always fond of change; he was confident, the better and wiser part of the citizens had taken no part in them, who must know that submission and decency are more efficacious than violence and outrage, to obtain redress, indulgence and favor. 'If prudence and lenity should prove insufficient to calm the fermentation, it would be necessary to provide for the maintenance of peace and good order, by such a timely exertion of force as the occasion might require; for which purpose, they would make the proper applications to general Gage or lord Colvil, commanders of his majesty's land and naval forces in America.'

He praised, however, the patience and magnanimity of the governor of New York, in having abstained from firing the artillery of the fort on the infatuated populace, which so provokingly approached; and testified his joy, that amidst so many disorders no blood had been spilt. He remarked that the distance of places prevented him from giving them more precise instructions; and, finally, that he placed great reliance upon their wisdom, discretion and prudence.

These despatches of the secretary of state, sufficiently evince what was his mode of thinking, with respect to American affairs; for, although he recommends the employment of force, if requisite, for the repression of tumults, he no where speaks of constraining the Americans to submit to the stamp act.

In the midst of so many storms, the year 1765 approached its conclusion, when the parliament was convoked, on the 17th of December. Although the king, in his opening speech, had made mention of American affairs, this subject which held in suspense not only Great Britain and her colonies, but even all Europe, was adjourned till the meeting of parliament after the Christmas holidays. Accordingly, on the 14th of January, 1766, the king adverted again to

the events which had occurred in America, as matters of extreme importance, which would require the most serious attention of parliament during its present session. Things were on all sides brought to maturity. The new ministers had laid before parliament all the information relating to this subject ; and, having previously arranged the system of measures they intended to pursue, they were fully prepared to answer the objections which they knew it must encounter from the opposite party. Likewise, those who from personal interest or from conviction, voluntarily or at the suggestion of others, proposed to support the ministers in their debates, had made all the dispositions they believed conducive to the object in view. On the other hand, the late ministers, and all their adherents, had strenuously exerted themselves, in making preparations to defend a law they had ushered into being, and the darling object of their solicitude ; fully apprised, apart from partiality for their own opinion, what dishonor, or at least what diminution of credit, they must sustain from its abrogation. But, whatever might have been the motives deducible from reasons of state, for the maintainance of the law, the prejudice which must result from it to the commerce of Great Britain, was already but too evident.

Accordingly, as if all the merchants of the kingdom had leagued for the purpose, they presented themselves at the bar of parliament, with petitions, tending to cause the repeal of the act. They represented how much their commerce had been affected, in consequence of the new regulations and the new laws concerning America.

‘ At this moment,’ they said, ‘ we see accumulated or perishing in our warehouses, immense quantities of British manufactures, which heretofore have found a ready market in America ; a very great number of artisans, manufacturers, and seamen, are without employment, and destitute of support. England is deprived of rice, indigo, tobacco, naval stores, oil, whale fins, furs, potash, and other commodities of American growth, that were brought by its inhabitants to our ports, in exchange for British manufactures. The merchants of Great Britain are frustrated of the remittances, in bills of exchange and bullion, which the Americans have hitherto procured them ; and which they obtained in payment for articles of their produce, not required for the British market, and therefore exported to other places ; already, many articles are wanting, heretofore procured by the Americans with their own funds, and with English manufactures, and which they brought eventually to the ports of England. From the nature of this trade, consisting of British manufactures exported, and of the import of raw materials from America, it must be deemed of the highest importance to the British nation ; since, among other advantages, it tended to lessen its dependence on foreign states ; but it is henceforth annihilated, without the immediate interposition of parliament. The merchants of Great Britain are in advance to the



colonists for the sum of several millions sterling, who are no longer able to make good their engagements, as they have heretofore done, so great is the damage they have sustained from the regulations of commerce recently introduced ; and many bankruptcies have actually occurred of late in the colonies, a thing almost without example in times past.' The petitioners added, that their situation was critical ; that without the immediate succours of parliament, they must be totally ruined ; that a multitude of manufacturers would likewise be reduced to the necessity of seeking subsistence in foreign countries, to the great prejudice of their own. They implored the parliament to preserve the strength of the nation entire, the prosperity of its commerce, the abundance of its revenues, the power of its navy, the immensity and wealth of its navigation, (the sources of the true glory of England, and her strongest bulwark) and finally, to maintain the colonies, from inclination, duty, and interest, firmly attached to the mother country.

The agent of Jamaica also presented a petition, in which were detailed the pernicious effects produced, in that Island by a stamp law, which had originated in the assembly of its own representatives. Other petitions were presented by the agents of Virginia and Georgia. All these were got up, at the suggestion of the ministers. The representations of the congress of New York were not admitted, because this assembly was unconstitutionally formed.

Not trusting to these preparatives, the ministers, passionately desirous of obtaining the revocation, resolved to employ the name and authority of Benjamin Franklin, a man who enjoyed at that time the greatest reputation. He was therefore interrogated, during the debates, in the presence of the house of commons. The celebrity of the person, the candor of his character, the recollection of all the services he had rendered his country, and the whole human race, by his physical discoveries, roused the attention of every mind. The galleries were crowded with spectators, eager to hear so distinguished an individual speak upon a subject of so much moment. He answered with gravity, and with extreme presence of mind. 'The Americans,' he said, 'already pay taxes on all estates, real and personal ; a poll tax ; a tax on all offices, professions, trades and businesses, according to their profits ; an excise on all wine, rum, and other spirits ; and a duty of ten pounds per head, on all negroes imported ; with some other duties. The assessments upon real and personal estates amount to eighteen pence in the pound ; and those upon the profits of employments to half a crown. The colonies could not in any way pay the stamp duty ; there is not gold and silver enough, in all the colonies, to pay the stamp duty even for one year. The Germans who inhabit Pennsylvania are more dissatisfied with this duty than the native colonists themselves. The Americans, since the new laws, have abated much of their affection for Great

Britain, and of their respect for parliament. There exists a great difference between internal and external duties; duties laid on commodities imported have no other effect than to raise the price of these articles in the American market; they make, in fact, a part of this price; but it is optional with the people either to buy them or not, and consequently to pay the duty or not. But an internal tax is forced from the people without their own consent, if not laid by their own representatives. The stamp act says, we shall have no commerce, make no exchange of property with each other, neither purchase nor grant, nor recover debts, we shall neither marry, nor make our wills, unless we pay such and such sums; and thus it is intended to extort our money from us, or ruin us by the consequences of refusing to pay it. The American colonists could, in a short time, find in their own manufactures the means of sufficing to themselves. The repeal of the stamp act would restore tranquillity, and things would resume their pristine course.'

Thus spoke Franklin; and his words were a powerful support to the ministers. But the advocates of the law were not inactive; and they marshalled all their strength to obstruct their repeal. The disquisitions and debates had continued with equal warmth on both sides, and the moment of decision approached; when George Grenville, the same who, being prime minister, had first proposed the stamp act in parliament, a man whose influence was extensive, and his adherents very numerous, arose in his place, and spoke in the following terms; 'If I could persuade myself that the pride of opinion, the spirit of party, or the affection which man usually bears to things done by himself, had so fascinated my intellectual sight and biassed the faculties of my mind, as to deprive me of all power to see and distinguish that which is manifest, I certainly, on this occasion, should have intrenched myself in silence, and thus displayed, if not my zeal for the public service, at least my prudence and discretion. But, as the affair now before us has been the subject of my most attentive consideration, and of my most deliberate reflection, at a period when the general tranquillity was uninterrupted by scandalous excesses; and as, from a contingency for which I claim no merit, it appears that to my honor and reputation the honor and dignity of this kingdom are attached, my prudence might be reputed coldness, and my discretion a base desertion.

'But where is the public, where is the private man, whatever may be his moderation, who is not roused at the present dangers which so imminently threaten the safety of our country?—who does not put forth all his strength to avert them? And who can help indulging the most sinister anticipations, in contemplating the new counsels and fatal inactivity of the present servants of the crown? A solemn law has been enacted in parliament, already a year since. It was, and still is, the duty of ministers to carry it into effect. The

constitution declares, that to suspend a law, or the execution of a law, by royal authority, and without consent of parliament, is felony ; in defiance of which, this law has been suspended,—has been openly resisted,—but did I say resisted ? Your delegates are insulted, their houses are pillaged ; even their persons are not secure from violence ; and, as if to provoke your patience, you are mocked and braved under the mouths of your artillery. Your ears are assailed from every quarter, with protestations that obedience cannot, shall not, ought not, to be rendered to your decrees. Perhaps other ministers, more old fashioned, would have thought it their duty, in such a case, to lend the law the aid of force ; thus maintaining the dignity of the crown and the authority of your deliberations. But those young gentlemen who sit on the opposite benches, and no one knows how, look upon these principles as the antiquated maxims of our simple ancestors, and disdain to honor with their attention mere acts of riot, sedition, and open resistance. With a patience truly exemplary, they recommend to the governors lenity and moderation ; they grant them permission to call in the aid of three or four soldiers from general Gage, and as many cock-boats from lord Colvil ; they commend them for not having employed, to carry the law into effect, the means which had been placed in their hands.

‘ Be prepared to see that the seditious are in the right, and that we only are in fault ; such, assuredly, is the opinion of the ministers. And who could doubt it ? They have declared it themselves, they incessantly repeat it, in your presence. It is but too apparent that, much against their will, they have at length laid before you the disorders and audacious enormities of the Americans ; for they began in July, and now we are in the middle of January ; lately, they were only *occurrences*—they are now grown to disturbances, tumults and riots. I doubt they border on open rebellion ; and if the doctrine I have heard this day be confirmed, I fear they will lose that name, to take that of revolution. May heaven bless the admirable resignation of our ministers ; but I much fear we shall gather no fruits from it of an agreeable relish. Occasion is fleeting, the danger is urgent ; and this undisciplinable people, the amiable object of their fond solicitude, of their tender care, are forming leagues, are weaving conspiracies, are preparing to resist the orders of the king and of the parliament. Continue then, ye men of long suffering, to march in the way you have chosen ; even repeal the law ; and see how many agents you will find zealous in the discharge of their duty, in executing the laws of the kingdom, in augmenting the revenues and diminishing the burthens of your people ; see, also, how many ministers you will find, who, for the public service, will oppose a noble and invincible firmness against the cabals of malignity, against the powerful combination of all private interests, against the clamors of the multitude, and the perversity of faction. In a word, if you would shiver all the springs of government, repeal the law.



‘I hear it asserted, from every quarter, by these defenders of the colonists, that they cannot be taxed by authority of parliament, because they are not there represented. But if so, why, and by what authority, do you legislate for them at all? If they are represented, they ought to obey all laws of parliament whatsoever, whether of the nature of taxes, or any other whatever. If they are not, they ought neither to submit to tax laws nor to any other. And if you believe the colonists ought not to be taxed by authority of parliament, from defect of representation, how will you maintain that nine tenths of the inhabitants of this kingdom, no better represented than the colonists, ought to submit to your taxation? The Americans have taken a hostile attitude towards the mother country; and you would not only forgive their errors, dissemble their outrages, remit the punishment due, but surrender at discretion, and acknowledge their victory complete! Is this preventing popular commotions? Is this repressing tumults and rebellion? Is it not rather to foment them, to encourage them to supply fresh fuel to the conflagration? Let any man, not blinded by the spirit of party, judge and pronounce. I would freely listen to the councils of clemency, I would even consent to the abrogation of the law, if the Americans had requested it in a decent mode; but their modes are outrages, derision, and the ways of force; pillage, plunder, arms and open resistance to the will of government. It is a thing truly inadmissible, and altogether new, that, at any moment, whenever the fancy may take them, or the the name of a law shall happen to displease them, these men should at once set about starving our manufacturers, and refuse to pay what they owe to the subjects of Great Britain. The officers of the crown, in America, have repeatedly solicited, and earnestly entreated, the ministers, to furnish them with proper means to carry the law into effect; but the latter have disregarded their instances; and, by this negligence, the American tumults have taken the alarming character we see. And shall we now suffer the ministers to come and allege the effects of their own neglect, to induce us to sacrifice the best interests of this kingdom, the majesty, the power, and even the reputation of the government, to an evil, overgrown indeed, but not past cure, the moment a suitable resolution is demonstrated to bring this infatuated multitude to a sense of duty? But, again, if the colonists are exempted, by their constitutions, from parliamentary taxes, as levies of seamen have been either prohibited or restricted in America, by different acts of parliament, it follows, of necessity, that they are not bound either to furnish men for the defence of the common country, or money to pay them; and that England alone must support the burthen of the maintainance and protection of these her ungrateful children. If such a partiality should be established, it must be at the hazard of depopulating this kingdom, and of dissolving that original compact upon which all human societies repose.

‘But I hear these subtle doctors attempting to inculcate a fantastical distinction between external and internal taxes, as if they were not the same as to the effect, that of taking money from the subjects for the public service. Wherefore, then, these new councils? When I proposed to tax America, I asked the house if any gentleman would object to the right? I repeatedly asked it; and no man would attempt to deny it. And tell me when the Americans were emancipated. When they want the protection of this kingdom, they are always very ready to ask it. This protection has always been afforded them in the most full and ample manner; and now they refuse to contribute their mite towards the public expenses. For, let not gentlemen deceive themselves, with regard to the rigor of the tax; it would not suffice even for the necessary expenses of the troops stationed in America; but a peppercorn, in acknowledgment of the right, is of more value than millions without. Yet, notwithstanding the slightness of the tax, and the urgency of our situation, the Americans grow sullen, and instead of concurring in expenses arising from themselves, they repounce your authority, insult your officers, and break out, I might almost say, into open rebellion.

‘There has been a time when they would not have proceeded thus; but they are now supported by ministers more American than English. Already, by the artifice of these young gentlemen, inflammatory petitions are handed about, against us, and in their favor. Even within this house, even in this sanctuary of the laws, sedition has found its defenders. Resistance to the laws is applauded, obstinacy encouraged, disobedience extolled, rebellion pronounced a virtue! Oh more than juvenile imprudence! Oh blind ambition of the human mind! But you give a fatal example; you will soon have ample cause to repent your own work.

‘And thou, ungrateful people of America, is this the return for the cares and fondness of thy ancient mother? When I had the honor of serving the crown, while you yourselves were loaded with an enormous debt, you have given bounties on their lumber, on their iron, their hemp, and many other articles. You have relaxed in their favor, the act of navigation, that palladium of the British commerce; and yet I have been abused, in all the public papers, as an enemy to the trade of America. I have been charged with giving orders and instructions to prevent the Spanish trade. I discouraged no trade but what was illicit, what was prohibited by act of parliament.

‘But it is meant first to columniate the man, and then destroy his work. Of myself I will speak no more; and the substance of my decided opinion, upon the subject of our debates, is briefly this; let the stamp act be maintained; and let the governors of the American provinces be provided with suitable means to repress disorders, and carry the law into complete effect.’

William Pitt, venerable for his age, and still more for the services he had rendered his country, rose to answer this discourse ; ' I know not whether I ought most to rejoice, that the infirmities which have been wasting, for so long a time, a body already bowed by the weight of years, of late suspending their ordinary violence, should have allowed me, this day, to behold these walls, and to discuss, in the presence of this august assembly, a subject of such high importance, and which so nearly concerns the safety of our country ; or to grieve at the rigor of destiny, in contemplating this country, which, within a few years had arrived at such a pinnacle of splendor and majesty, and become formidable to the universe from the immensity of its power, now wasted by an intestine evil, a prey to civil discords, and madly hastening to the brink of the abyss, into which the united force of the most powerful nations of Europe, struggled in vain to plunge it. Would to heaven that my health had permitted my attendance here, when it was first proposed to tax America ! If my feeble voice should not have been able to avert the torrent of calamities which has fallen upon us, and the tempest which threatens us, at least my testimony would have attested that I had no part in them.

' It is now an act that has passed ; I would speak with decency of every act of this house, but I must beg the indulgence of the house to speak of it with freedom. Assuredly, a more important subject never engaged your attention, that subject only excepted, when, near a century ago, it was the question whether you yourselves were to be bound or free. Those who have spoken before me, with so much vehemence, would maintain the act because our honor demands it. If gentlemen consider the subject in that light, they leave all measures of right and wrong to follow a delusion that may lead to destruction. But can the point of honor stand opposed against justice, against reason, against right ? Wherein can honor better consist than in doing reasonable things ? It is my opinion that England has no right to tax the colonies. At the same time, I assert the authority of this kingdom over the colonies to be sovereign and supreme, in every circumstance of government and legislation whatsoever. The colonists are the subjects of this kingdom, equally entitled with yourselves to all the natural rights of mankind, and the peculiar privileges of Englishmen. Equally bound by its laws, and equally participating of the constitution of this free country. The Americans are the sons, not the bastards, of England. Taxation is no part of the governing or legislative power. The taxes are a voluntary gift and grant of the commons alone. In legislation, the three estates of the realm are alike concerned ; but the concurrence of the peers and the crown to a tax, is only necessary to close with the form of a law. The gift and grant is of the commons alone ; now this house represents the commons, as they virtually represent the rest of the inhabitants ; when, therefore in this house, we give and grant, we give and grant



what is our own. But in an American tax, what do we do? We, your majesty's commons of Great Britain, give and grant to your majesty, what? Our own property? No. We give and grant to your majesty, the property of your commons of America. It is an absurdity in terms. It was just now affirmed, that no difference exists between internal and external taxes, and that taxation is an essential part of legislation. Are not the crown and the peers equally legislative powers with the commons? If taxation be a part of simple legislation, the crown, the peers, have rights in taxation as well as yourselves; rights which they will claim, which they will exercise, whenever the principal can be supported by power.

'There is an idea in some, that the Americans are virtually represented in this house; but I would fain know by what province, county, city, or borough, they are represented here? No doubt by some province, county, city, or borough, never seen or known by them or their ancestors, and which they never will see or know.

'The commons of America, represented in their several assemblies, have ever been in possession of the exercise of this, their constitutional right, of giving and granting their own money. They would have been slaves if they had not enjoyed it.

'I come not here armed at all points, with law cases, and acts of parliament, with the statute book doubled down in dog's ears, as my valiant adversary has done. But I know, at least, if we are to take example from ancient facts, that, even under the most arbitrary reigns, parliaments were ashamed of taxing a people without their consent, and allowed them representatives; and in our own times, even those who send no members to parliament, are all at least inhabitants of Great Britain. Many have it in their option to be actually represented. They have connexions with those that elect, and they have influence over them. Would to heaven that all were better represented than they are! It is the vice of our constitution; perhaps the day will arrive, and I rejoice in the hope, when the mode of representation, this essential part of our civil organisation, and principal safeguard of our liberty, will be carried to that perfection, which every good Englishman must desire.

'It has been asked, when were the Americans emancipated? But I desire to know when they were made slaves?

'It is said, that in this house the signal of resistance has been given, that the standard of rebellion has been erected; and thus it is attempted to stigmatise the fairest prerogative of British senators, that of speaking what they think, and freely discussing the interests of their country. They have spoken their sentiments with freedom, against this unhappy act; they have foreseen, they have predicted the perils that impend; and this frankness is imputed as a crime. Sorry I am to observe, that we can no longer express our opinions in this house, without being exposed to censure; we must prepare for

a disastrous futurity, if we do not oppose, courageously, with our tongues, our hearts, our hands, the tyranny with which we are menaced. I hear it said, that—America is obstinate, America is almost in open rebellion. I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people, so dead to all the feelings of liberty, as voluntarily to submit to be slaves, would have been fit instruments to make slaves of ourselves. The honorable member has said also, for he is fluent in words of bitterness, that America is ungrateful; he boasts of his bounties towards her; but are not these bounties intended, finally, for the benefit of this kingdom? And how is it true that America is ungrateful? Does she not voluntarily hold a good correspondence with us? The profits to Great Britain, from her commerce with the colonies, are two millions a year. This is the fund that carried you triumphantly through the last war. The estates that were rented at two thousand pounds a year, seventy years ago, are at three thousand pounds at present. You owe this to America. This is the price she pays for your protection. I omit the increase of population in the colonies; the migration of new inhabitants from every part of Europe; and the ulterior progress of American commerce, should it be regulated by judicious laws. And shall we hear a miserable financier come with a boast that he can fetch a peppercorn into the exchequer, to the loss of millions to the nation? The gentleman complains that he has been misrepresented in the public prints. I can only say, it is a misfortune common to all that fill high stations, and take a leading part in public affairs. He says, also, that when he first asserted the right of parliament to tax America, he was not contradicted. I know not how it is, but there is a modesty in this house, which does not choose to contradict a minister. If gentlemen do not get the better of this modesty, perhaps the collective body may begin to abate of its respect for the representative. A great deal has been said without doors, and more than is discreet, of the power, of the strength, of America. But, in a good cause, on a sound bottom, the force of this country can crush America to atoms; but on the ground of this tax, when it is wished to prosecute an evident injustice, I am one who will lift my hands and my voice against it.

‘In such a cause, your success would be deplorable, and victory hazardous. America, if she fell, would fall like the strong man. She would embrace the pillars of the state, and pull down the constitution along with her. Is this your boasted peace?—not to sheath the sword in its scabbard, but to sheath it in the bowels of your countrymen? Will you quarrel with yourselves, now the whole house of Bourbon is united against you?—while France disturbs your fisheries in Newfoundland, embarrasses your slave trade with Africa, and withholds from your subjects in Canada their pro-

perty stipulated by treaty?—while the ransom for the Manillas is denied by Spain, and its gallant conqueror traduced into a mean plunderer? The Americans have not acted in all things with prudence and temper. They have been wronged. They have been driven to madness by injustice. Will you punish them for the madness you have occasioned? Rather let prudence and benignity come first from the strongest side. Excuse their errors; learn to honor their virtues. Upon the whole, I will beg leave to tell the house what is really my opinion. I consider it most consistent with our dignity, most useful to our liberty, and in every respect the safest for this kingdom, that the stamp act be repealed, absolutely, totally, and immediately. At the same time, let the sovereign authority of this country over the colonies be asserted in as strong terms as can be devised, and be made to extend to every point of legislation whatsoever; that we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power whatsoever, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent.'

These words, pronounced in a firm and solemn tone, by a man of so great authority, acted with extreme force upon the minds of the hearers.

They still retained, however, a deep resentment, on account of the excesses committed by the Americans; and perhaps the repeal of the act would not have taken place, if, at the same time, the ministers had not accompanied it with the declaration of which we shall speak presently. Some also are of the opinion, that the affair was much facilitated by the promise of an early repeal of the cider tax, which was, in effect, afterwards debated, and pronounced in the month of April. The members from the counties where cider is made, all voted for the repeal of the stamp act. However the truth of this may be, the question being put, on the 22d of February, whether the act for the repeal of the stamp act should pass? it was carried in the affirmative; not, however, without a great number of contrary votes; two hundred and sixty-five voting in favor, and one hundred and sixty-seven against. It was approved in the house of peers; one hundred and fifty-five votes were in favor, sixty-one were contrary. At the same time was passed the declaratory act, purporting that the legislature of Great Britain has authority to make laws and statutes to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever. On the 19th of March, the king, having repaired to the house of peers, gave his assent to the act of repeal, and that of the dependence of the colonies towards Great Britain. The American merchants at that time in London, went, in a body, to testify their joy and gratitude upon this occasion. The ships which lay at anchor in the Thames, displayed their colors in token of felicitation. The houses were illuminated in all parts of the city; salutes were heard, and



bonfires were kindled, in all quarters. In a word, none of the public demonstrations, usual on similar occurrences, were omitted, to celebrate the goodness of the king, and the wisdom of parliament.

Couriers were immediately despatched to Falmouth, to spread throughout the kingdom, and transmit to America the tidings of a law, which, to appearance, must, on the one hand, by appeasing irritation, put a stop to all further tumults ; and, on the other, dissipate the alarms produced by the losses the manufacturers had sustained.

END OF BOOK SECOND.

## BOOK THIRD.

THE Americans, generally, either weary of the present disorders, annoyed by the interruption of commerce, or terrified at the aspect of the future, which seemed to threaten the last extremities, received with great exultation the news of the revocation of the stamp act.

With infinite delight, they found themselves released from the necessity either of proceeding to the last resort, and to civil bloodshed, a thing horrible in itself, and accompanied with innumerable dangers, or of submitting their necks to a yoke equally detested, and which had become the more odious from the efforts they had already made in resistance. It is easy to imagine, therefore, how great were, in every place, the demonstrations of public joy. Even the assembly of Massachusetts, either from a sentiment of gratitude, or to confirm itself in opposition, for among its members were many of the most distinguished citizens of the province, all firmly resolved to maintain the dependence of America towards Great Britain, unanimously voted thanks to be addressed to the duke of Grafton, to William Pitt, and to all those members of the house of peers, or of commons, who had defended the rights of the colonies, and procured the abrogation of the odious law. In like manner, the assembly of burgesses of Virginia resolved that a statue should be erected to the king, in acknowledgment and commemoration of the repeal of the stamp act; and an obelisk, in honor of those illustrious men who had so efficaciously espoused their cause. William Pitt, especially, had become the object of public veneration and boundless praises, for having said the Americans had done well in resisting; little heeding that he had recommended, in terms so strong and remarkable, the confirmation of the authority of parliament over the colonies, in all points of legislation and external taxation. But they saw the consequences of these measures only in the distance; and considered the assertion of certain rights of parliament merely as speculative principles thrown out to spare its dignity, to sooth British pride, and facilitate the digestion of so bitter a morsel. Besides, to justify past events, and perhaps also to authorise their future designs, the colonists were glad to have the shield of so great a name. They received with the same alacrity the declaratory act, which the secretary of state transmitted to America at the same time with that for the repeal of the stamp act.

Notwithstanding this expression of universal exultation, the public mind was not entirely appeased. Secret grudges, and profound resentments, still rankled under these brilliant appearances. The restraints recently laid upon commerce, had caused a disgust no less extreme than the stamp act itself, particularly in the northern provinces; and the success of the first resistance encouraged ulterior hopes.

During the late disturbances, men had become extremely conversant with political disquisitions ; every charter, every right, had been the subject of the strictest investigation ; and the Americans rarely, if ever, pronounced against themselves. From these discussions and debates, new opinions had resulted upon a great number of points, and some of them strangely exaggerated, respecting the rights of the Americans, and the nature of their relations with Great Britain. The irritation and inflexibility of their minds had increased in the same proportion. In this state of excitement, the shadow of an encroachment upon their political or civil liberty would have caused a sudden insurrection ; and the attentive observer might easily have perceived, that the reconciliation between the colonies and the mother country was more apparent than real ; and that the first occasion would be seized, to break out afresh in discord and revolt.

The occasion of new dissensions, and the elements of a new combustion, originated in the provinces of Massachusetts and of New York. The assembly of the former bore ill will to the governor, Sir Francis Bernard, for being, as they believed, a foe to the cause of America ; and having chosen for their speaker James Otis, one of the warmest advocates of liberty existing in America at that period, the governor refused to confirm the choice ; at which the representatives were highly exasperated. Otis, meanwhile, to retaliate, succeeded in causing to be excluded from the assembly the officers of the crown, and the members of the superior court of judicature, who were Hutchinson and Oliver. The governor, much incensed, pronounced, on his part, the exclusion of six of the proposed candidates for the speaker's chair. Thus the spirit of division was reciprocally fomented. But the patriots went further still ; and procured a resolution of the assembly, that their debates should be public, and that galleries should be constructed, for the accommodation of such as might wish to attend them ; this was promptly executed. The intervention of the public at their deliberations encouraged the partisans of liberty, and disheartened the friends of power ; the former were sure of increasing their popularity, by warmly advocating the privileges of the colonies ; the latter, of incurring greater aversion, and more universal hatred, in proportion to their zeal in supporting the cause of the government. Hence, numbers were deterred from taking part in the debates. The first had, besides, a powerful advantage over them ; for it sufficed to render their adversaries odious to the people, to reproach them, true or false, with having favored the stamp act. The secretary of state, along with the act repealing the stamp act, had also sent the governors of the provinces, a resolution of the house of commons, purporting, ' That all persons, who, on account of the desire which they had manifested to comply with, or to assist in carrying into execution, any acts of



parliament, had suffered any injury or damage, ought to have full compensation made to them, by the respective colonies in which such injuries or damages were sustained.' The secretary had also recommended to the governors, to be particularly attentive that such persons should be effectually secured from any further insult or disgust ; and that they might be treated with that respect and justice which their merits towards the crown, and their past sufferings, undoubtedly claimed.

It was principally in the province of Massachusetts, that these disorders had taken place ; and the governor, Bernard, lost no time in communicating to the assembly the resolution of the house of commons ; but this he did in such intemperate language as gave great offence to the representatives, and greatly imbibited, on both sides, the misunderstanding already existing between them. Much altercation ensued ; in which the assembly armed itself sometimes with one excuse, and sometimes with another, for not granting the indemnifications required ; till at length, resuming the further consideration of the subject, and reflecting, on the one hand, that in any event the parliament would have the power to raise the sum necessary for the compensations, by imposing some new duty on the maritime ports, and on the other, that this new resistance might render them odious in the eyes of prudent men, as the refractory spirit of Massachusetts had already been greatly censured, they resolved, that the indemnifications should be made, at the expense of the province ; and accordingly passed an act for granting compensation to the sufferers, and general pardon, amnesty and oblivion, to the offenders ; to which the king afterwards refused his sanction ; denying the authority of the colonial assemblies to grant acts of general pardon. Meanwhile, the indemnifications were made ; and the offenders were not prosecuted. The assembly of New York appeared to receive the act of compensation more favorably ; and the greater part of the sufferers were indemnified. Colden, the lieutenant-governor, was alone refused compensation ; the assembly alleging, that if the people had risen against him, he had brought it upon himself by his misconduct.

But, in the same province, another dispute soon arose, which manifested how imperfectly the seeds of discord were extinguished. General Gage was expected at New York with a considerable body of troops ; in consequence of which, the governor addressed a message to the assembly, requesting it to put in execution the act of parliament called the mutiny act, which requires, that in the colonies where the royal troops are stationed, they shall be provided with barracks and other necessary articles. The assembly complied only in part with this requisition, and with evident repugnance. They passed a bill for providing barracks, fire-wood, candles, bedding, and utensils for the kitchen, as demanded ; but they refused to grant salt, vinegar, and cider or beer ; saying, it was not customary to

furnish these articles to soldiers when in quarters, but only when they are on the march.

The governor thought it prudent to acquiesce in this decision. And here is presented a striking example of the mildness of the British ministers at this epoch; for, instead of resenting and chastising, as some advised, this new disobedience, they contented themselves with procuring a law to be passed, by which it was enacted that the legislative power of the general assembly of New York should be totally suspended, until it fully complied with all the terms of the requisition. The assembly afterwards obeyed; and things were restored to their accustomed order.

The same disputes were renewed in Massachusetts. Towards the close of the year, some companies of artillery were driven, by stress of weather, into the port of Boston. The governor was requested to lodge them, and procure them the necessary supplies; the council gave their consent; and the money was drawn from the treasury, by the governor's order. Meanwhile, the assembly met; and, desirous of engaging in controversy, sent a message to the governor, to inquire if any provision had been made for his majesty's troops, and whether more were expected to arrive, to be quartered also in the town? The governor replied by sending them the minutes of the council, with an account of the expenses incurred; and added, that no other troops were expected. They had now ample matter for discussions. They exclaimed, that the governor, in giving orders for these supplies, upon the mere advice of his council, had acted, in an essential point, contrary to the statutes of the province. They added, however, some protestations of their readiness to obey the orders of the king, when requested according to established usages.

This obstinacy of two principal provinces of America, this disposition to seek new causes of contention, sensibly afflicted those persons in England who had shown themselves favorable to American privileges; and furnished a pretext for the bitter sarcasms of their adversaries, who repeated, every where, that such were the fruits of ministerial condescension,—such was the loyalty, such the gratitude of the colonists towards the mother country!

'Behold their attachment for public tranquillity! Behold the respect and deference they bear towards the British government! They have now thrown off the mask; they now rush, without restraint, towards their favorite object of separation and independence. It is quite time to impose a curb on these audacious spirits; they must be taught the danger of contending with their powerful progenitors, of resisting the will of Great Britain. Since they are thus insensible to the indulgence and bounty she has shown them in the repeal of the stamp duty, they must be made to pay another; both to maintain the right, and compel them to contribute directly to the common defence of the kingdom.'

These suggestions were greatly countenanced by the landholders of the British islands; who persuaded themselves, that the more could be raised by a tax laid upon the colonies, the more their own burthens would be lessened. These opinions were also flattering to British pride, which had been hurt to the quick by the revocation of the stamp act; and still more profoundly stung by the repugnance of the Americans to any submission. The king himself, who with extreme reluctance, had consented to the repeal of the act, manifested a violent indignation; and lord Bute, always his most intimate counsellor, and generally considered as the author of rigorous councils, appeared anew much disposed to lay a heavy hand upon the Americans. Hence, about the last of July, an unexpected change of ministry was effected. The duke of Grafton was appointed first secretary of the treasury, in the place of the marquis of Rockingham; the earl of Shelburne, secretary of state, instead of the duke of Richmond; Charles Townsend, a man of versatile character, but of brilliant genius, chancellor of the exchequer, in the room of William Dowdeswell; and finally, William Pitt, who had recently been created viscount Pincent, and earl of Chatham, was promoted (1767) to the charge of keeper of the seals. The new ministers, with the exception, however, of the earl of Chatham, who was prevented by his infirmities from taking part in the councils, resolved to impose certain duties on tea, glass, and paints, upon their introduction into the colonies of America. The bill was drawn up to be submitted to parliament. No sooner was it convened, than Charles Townsend began, vauntingly, to vociferate in the house of commons, that he knew a mode of drawing a revenue from the colonies, without violating their rights or opinions. Grenville caught at the words, and urged the minister to declare what it was, and to promise, that he would bring it before parliament without delay. A short time after, in effect, the chancellor of the exchequer moved in the house of commons, to impose duties on tea, glass and colors, imported from England into the American colonies; he proposed also, to suppress the duties on teas that should be shipped from England, intended for America; and impose a duty of three pence per pound, upon their introduction into the American ports. These two bills were passed without much opposition, and approved by the king.

In the preamble it was declared that the produce of the duties should be applied to defray the expenses of the government and administration of the colonies. In one article it was provided, that in each province of North America should be formed a general civil list, without any fixed limit; that is, that from the produce of the new duties, a public fund should be composed, of which the government might dispose immediately, even to the last shilling, for the salaries and pensions to be paid in America. The ministers were authorised to draw this money from the treasury, and employ it at



their discretion ; the surplus was to remain in the treasury, subject to the disposal of parliament. It was also enacted, that the government might, from the same funds, grant stipends and salaries to the governors and to the judges, in the colonies, and determine the amount of the same. These last measures were of much greater importance than the taxes themselves, since they were entirely subversive of the British constitution.

In effect, since the time of Charles II., the ministers had many times attempted, but always without success, to establish a civil list, or royal chamber, in America, independent of the colonial assemblies ; and yet Charles Townsend, with his shrewd and subtle genius, thus obtained, as it were, while sporting, this difficult point ; and obtained it, while the remembrance of American opposition, in a matter of much less importance, was still recent ; while the traces of so great a conflagration were still smoking ! These new measures produced another change of great importance ; the governors and the judges being able to obtain, through the ministers, their respective emoluments, from funds raised by an act of parliament, without the intervention, and perhaps against the will of the colonial assemblies, became entirely independent of the American nation, and of its assemblies ; and must found all their future hopes on the favor of the general government alone, that is, of the British ministers. The act imposing the new duties was to take effect on the 20th of November ; but as if it was apprehended in England that the new tax would be too well received by the colonists ; and purposely to irritate their minds, by placing before their eyes the impressive picture of the tax gatherers to be employed in the collection of these duties, another act was passed, creating a permanent administration of the customs in America. And, to crown such a measure, the city of Boston was selected for the seat of this new establishment ; for such a purpose, less proper than any other ; for no where were the inhabitants more restless or jealous of their privileges ; which they interpreted with a subtilty peculiar to themselves.

They were, besides, not accustomed to see among them an order of financiers, lavishing in the refinements of luxury, the large emoluments to be defrayed with the money of the colonies, while they were themselves constrained to observe the limits of an extremely narrow mediocrity. From these causes combined, it resulted that many commotions were excited anew among the Americans. The recent disturbances had given them a more decided inclination towards resistance ; and their political researches had increased the pretensions of rights, and the desire of a liberty more ample. As this was an external tax, if more tranquil times had been chosen for its introduction, and without the combination of so many circumstances, which wounded them in their dearest interests, the people, perhaps, would have submitted to it. But in such a state of things, what

could have been expected from a tax, the produce of which was destined to form a branch of the public revenue, and which exceeded the limits of a commercial regulation, a thing which had already furnished the subject of so much controversy? It was too manifest that the British government had resolved to renew its ancient pretensions, so long and firmly disputed, of establishing a public revenue in the colonies, by the authority of parliament.

Resistance, therefore, was every where promptly resolved; and as the passions, after being compressed for a time, when rekindled in the human breast, no longer respect their ancient limits, but commonly overleap them with impetuosity; so the political writers of Boston began to fill the columns of the public papers with new and bold opinions respecting the authority of parliament. Already intimations were thrown out, illusive to independence; and it was asserted, that freemen ought not to be taxed, any more than governed, without their consent, given by an actual or virtual representation.

The legislative power of the parliament over the colonies was not made the subject of doubt, but denied. Adopting the opinion of those who in the two houses had opposed the repeal of the stamp act, the patriots affirmed that all distinction between internal and external taxes was chimerical, and that parliament had no right to impose the one or the other; that it had no power to make laws to bind the colonies; and, finally, they went so far as to maintain, that not being represented in parliament, they were exempted from every sort of dependence towards it.

The rights which the colonists pretended to enjoy, were explained with great perspicuity, and a certain elegance of style, in a pamphlet entitled, *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer, to the inhabitants of the English colonies*. They were received with great and universal favor; the author was John Dickenson.

The excitement soon became general. New associations were formed against the introduction of British manufactures, and in favor of those made at home. A paper to this effect was circulated in Boston, for such to subscribe as were disposed to become parties to the confederacy; they bound themselves by it not to purchase certain articles of commerce, after the last day of December.

But on the other hand, James Otis, from a motive unknown, whether from levity of character, or because the most ardent are frequently the least constant in their opinions, or because he really was apprehensive that the colony of Massachusetts would be left alone in the present controversy, passing from one extreme to the other, pronounced a long discourse in favor of government. Notwithstanding which, the league was approved at Providence, at Newport, and in all Connecticut. The affair of these combinations, however, advanced very slowly this time, in spite of all the efforts of the most zealous patriots.

1768. The assembly of Massachusetts opened their session at the commencement of the year 1768, and immediately took into consideration the subject of the new taxes; a very elaborate letter was addressed to Dennis de Berdt, their agent at London, instructing him to make remonstrances. They protested their affection towards Great Britain, and condemned all idea of independence, they gloried in the English name, and their participation in the British constitution. 'The design,' they observed, 'to draw a public revenue from the colonies, without their consent, is manifest; a thing absolutely contrary to the established laws, and to *our rights*. Though men are known sometimes to disregard life, and even to contemn liberty, they are always at least inviolably attached to their property; even those who ridicule the ideas of right and justice, who despise faith, truth and honor, and every law, divine and human, will put a high value upon money; the savages themselves, who inhabit the forests, know and admit the right of property; they are as strongly attached to the bow, the arrow, and the tomahawk, to their hunting and fishing ground, as other nations can be to gold or silver, and the most precious objects. The Utopian schemes of levelling, and a community of goods, are as visionary and impracticable, as those which vest all property in the crown, are arbitrary and despotic. Now, what property can the colonists be conceived to have, if their money may be granted away by others, without their consent?' They added a long enumeration of their rights, and of the commercial advantages accruing to Great Britain, from her colonies; they affirmed, that stipends and salaries, granted by the crown to governors and judges, were things of a nature to alarm the freemen of America; that a more solid foundation for tyranny could not be laid, since the judges in America hold their places, not as in England, during good behavior, but during pleasure; that the colonists were ready to supply the subsidies necessary for the public service, without the intervention of parliamentary authority; that a standing army was unnecessary in America; that the inhabitants had an aversion to these armies, as dangerous to their civil liberties; that England herself, considering the examples of ancient times, ought to fear lest these large bodies of mercenary troops, stationed in a country so remote, might occasion another Cæsar to arise, and usurp, at length, the authority of his sovereign. They also complained of the new board of customs, as tending to create a swarm of pensioners; a race ever obnoxious to the people, and prejudicial to the rectitude and purity of manners. 'Can any thing be more extraordinary than the suspension of the assembly of New York? Liberty has no longer an existence, and these assemblies are useless if, willing or not willing, they must conform to the mandates of parliament. And supposing also, what we deny, that the new laws are founded in right, it is not the less certain that a real prejudice to the two nations



will be their result, and that the confidence and affection which have hitherto united them, will experience, from their continuance, a signal diminution. These are points which merit the serious consideration of a good government. The colonists are not insensible that it has become fashionable in England, to speak with contempt of the colonial assemblies; an abuse from which the English have more to apprehend than the Americans themselves; for only a few reigns back, the habit also prevailed of contemning the parliament; and it was even an aphorism with king James I. that the lords and commons were two very bad copartners with a monarch, in allusion to the ancient proverb, that supreme power declines all participation; and these attacks, though at present aimed at the colonial assemblies, will one day be directed against the parliament itself.'

They concluded by recommending to their agent to exert his utmost endeavors to defeat the projects of those who persisted with obstinacy in their attempts to sow dissensions, and foment jealousy and discord between the two parts of the realm; dispositions, which, if not promptly repressed, it was to be feared, would lead to irreparable mischief.

The assembly of Massachusetts wrote in similar terms to the earl of Shelburne, and to general Conway, secretaries of state; to the marquis of Rockingham, to lord Camden, to the earl of Chatham, and to the commissioners of the treasury. These letters, as usual, recapitulated the rights of the colonies, and their grievances; those to whom they were addressed, were styled the patrons of the colonies, the friends of the British constitution, the defenders of the human race. The assembly of Massachusetts also addressed a petition to the king, with many protestations of loyalty, and strenuous remonstrances against the grievances already mentioned. But not content with these steps, and wishing to unite all the provinces in one opinion, they took a very spirited resolution, that of writing to all the other assemblies, that it was now full time for all to take the same direction, and to march in concert towards the same object. This measure gave the ministers no little displeasure, and they censured it, in their letters to the governors, with extreme asperity.

The governor of Massachusetts, not without apprehensions from the refractory spirit of this assembly, dissolved it. Nor should it be omitted, that for a long time, there had existed an open breach between these two authorities, which proceeded from no defect of genius or experience in affairs, on the part of the governor, who possessed, on the contrary, an ample measure of both; but he was reputed a secret enemy to American privileges, and it was believed that in his letters to the earl of Hillsborough, he had prompted the government to acts of rigor, and exaggerated the colonial disturbances. On the other hand, the representatives were of a lofty spirit, and devotedly attached to their prerogatives. In this state of reci-

procal umbrage and jealousy, the smallest collision led to a dissension, and few were the affairs that could be concluded amicably. In effect, it cannot be doubted, that the animosity which subsisted between the assembly of so capital a province, and governor Bernard, was one of the principal causes of the first commotions, and eventually, of the American revolution.

The government of Great Britain, continually stimulated by the exhortations of the governor,—dissatisfied with the Bostonians, and the inhabitants generally of the province of Massachusetts, was apprehensive of new tumults ; and resolved to provide effectually for the execution of the laws. Orders were despatched to general Gage, to send a regiment, and even a more considerable force, if he should deem it expedient, to form the garrison of Boston. It was also determined, that a frigate, two brigs, and two sloops of war, should be stationed in the waters of Boston, to aid the officers of the customs in the execution of their functions.

At this same epoch, a violent tumult had occurred in this city. The Bostonians, wishing to protect a vessel suspected of illicit traffic, had riotously assailed and repulsed the officers of the revenue.

Informed of this event, general Gage detached two regiments instead of one, to take up their quarters in Boston. At this news, the inhabitants assembled, and sent a deputation to the governor, praying him to inform them, if the reports in circulation, relative to a garrison extraordinary, were true ; and to convoke another assembly. He answered, that he had indeed received some private intimation of the expected arrival of troops, but no official notice ; that as to the convocation of an assembly, he could take no resolution without the orders of his majesty.

He flattered himself, that the people would become more submissive, when, left to themselves, they should no longer have a rallying point for sedition in the colonial assembly. He endeavored, therefore, to gain time ; inventing, every day, new motives for delaying the session of the assembly. But this conduct produced an effect directly contrary to his anticipations. The inhabitants of Boston, having received the answer of the governor, immediately took an unanimous resolution, sufficiently demonstrative of the real nature of the spirit by which they were animated ; it was resolved, that, as there was some probability of an approaching war with France, all the inhabitants should provide themselves with a complete military equipment, according to law ; and that, as the governor had not thought proper to convene the general assembly, a convention should be convoked of the whole province. These resolutions were transmitted, by circulars, to every part of Massachusetts ; and such was the consent of opinions, that out of ninety-seven townships, ninety-six sent their deputies to the convention of Boston.

They met on the 22d of September. Wishing to proceed with moderation, they sent a message to the governor, assuring him that they were, and considered themselves, as private and loyal individuals; but no less averse to standing armies, than to tumults and sedition. They complained, but in measured terms, of the new laws, and the imputations of disloyalty with which they had been traduced in England. Finally, they entreated the governor to convoke the general assembly, as the only constitutional remedy that could be resorted to in the present calamities. The governor answered haughtily, as the troops already approached. The convention, after having communicated what had occurred to De Berdt, the agent at London, dissolved itself.

The day preceding their separation, the soldiers destined for the garrison, arrived, on board a great number of vessels, in the bay of Nantasket, not far from Boston. The governor requested the council to furnish quarters in the city. The council refused; alleging that castle William, situated on a small island in the harbor, was sufficiently roomy to receive the troops. But the commanders of the corps had orders to take their quarters in the town. Meanwhile, it was given out, that the Bostonians would not suffer the soldiers to land. This menace, and especially the resolution of a general armament, inspired the commanders of the royal troops with much distrust. Consequently, general Gage, whose intention, it appears, had been at first to land one regiment only, gave orders to colonel Dalrymple to disembark the two, and to keep a strict guard in the city. Accordingly, on the first of October, every preparation having been made, the squadron, consisting of fourteen ships of war, began to move, and took such a position as to command the whole city; the ships presented their broadsides, and the artillery was in readiness to fire upon the town, in case of any resistance. The troops began to disembark at one o'clock in the afternoon, without receiving any molestation; they immediately entered the town, with their arms loaded, a suitable train of artillery, and all the military parade usually displayed in such circumstances. The selectmen of Boston being requested, in the evening, to provide quarters for the soldiers, peremptorily refused. The governor ordered the soldiers to enter and occupy the State House. Thus stationed, the main guard was posted in front of this edifice, with two field pieces pointed towards it. The Bostonians were naturally much shocked at these arrangements. They could not see, without extreme indignation, the palace of the public counsels, the ordinary seat of their general assemblies, and the courts of judicature, occupied by so many troops, and on all sides surrounded by such a display of arms. The streets were full of tents, and of soldiers, continually coming and going to relieve the posts; who challenged at every moment the citizens as they passed. The divine services were interrupted by the



continual beating of drums and the sound of fifes ; and all things presented the image of a camp. The inhabitants experienced the most insupportable constraint from a state of things not only extraordinary, but even without example, in the province of Massachusetts. Cries of displeasure resounded from every quarter against these new orders of the governor. The soldiers beheld the citizens with an evil eye, believing them to be rebels ; the citizens detested the soldiers, whom they looked upon as the instruments of an odious project to abolish their rights, and sent to impose on them the yoke of an unheard of tyranny. The most irritating language frequently passed between them, and thus exasperated their reciprocal animosity.

It is true, however, that this display of military force so repressed the multitude, that for a considerable space of time tranquillity was preserved.

1769. But in England, the parliament having been convoked about the close of the year 1768, the obstinacy of the Americans, in refusing obedience to its new laws, determined the government to adopt rigorous measures against the colonies, and especially against the province of Massachusetts, where sedition had acquired the profoundest roots. The parliament condemned, in the severest terms, all the resolutions taken by this province. They approved that the king should employ force of arms for the repression of the disobedient ; and declared, that he had the right to cause the chief authors of the disorders to be arrested, and brought to England for trial, according to the statute of the 35th year of the reign of Henry VIII.

But these new measures of the English encountered a very ill reception in America. The assembly of Virginia immediately took, in the strongest terms that could be devised, the resolutions they believed the most proper to secure their rights. They also drew up a supplication to be presented to the king, with a view of exciting his compassion towards an unfortunate people. He was conjured as the father of his subjects, and as a clement king, to interpose his royal intercession, and avert the evils which menaced and already oppressed them ; his pity was implored, that he would not suffer the colonists, who had no powerful protection, to be forced from their firesides, wrested from the embraces of their families, and thrust into dungeons, among robbers and felons, at the distance of three thousand miles from their country, to linger until judges whom they knew not should have pronounced their fate. A condition so deplorable would leave them no other wish, no other prayer, but that relenting death might soon deliver them from so many miseries. These proceedings incurred the displeasure of the governor, who dissolved them, with a severe reprimand. But they assembled in another place, as private individuals ; and having chosen for their

moderator Peyton Randolph, a man of great influence in the province, they resorted, more strenuously than ever, to the ordinary remedy of associations against the introduction of British manufactures. The articles of the league having been circulated for the purpose, were soon invested with all the signatures, not only of the assembly, but of the entire province. The other colonies followed the example, and adhered to the confederacy upon oath. The inhabitants of Charleston, the capital of South Carolina, even discontinued all commerce with those of Rhode Island and of Georgia, as well because they had refused to join this combination, or the preceding, as because they had exercised an extensive contraband traffic. But at length these provinces also concurred with the others ; Georgia in September, Providence and Rhode Island a month later.

In order to prevent the contraventions which avarice, or a secret opposition, might have produced, committees of inspectors were created, to examine the cargoes of all vessels arriving from England, and to stigmatise with the censure specified in their regulations, those who should violate their compact, by publishing their names in the public papers, and declaring them enemies to the country ; and, as the people were always ready to take those in hand who should be thus denounced, the decrees of these committees were received with general obedience, as if they had proceeded from the authority of government. All were emulous to make use of the manufactures of the country ; even the women, hitherto so decided in their taste for English merchandise, not only renounced it, but took a laudable pride in adorning themselves with objects of domestic manufacture.

It is not to be understood, however, that in the midst of this general zeal and enthusiasm, there were no examples of persons, who, governed by interest and a thirst of gain, these powerful motives of the human breast, sought to make their profit of circumstances ; extolling, in public, the magnanimity of the American people, but deriding it in their hearts, they addicted themselves to a secret commerce in the merchandise proscribed. Even among those who preached liberty, and affected to be called by its name, even among those who with the most forwardness had embraced the league, there was more than one individual who clandestinely bought and sold. The patriots had declared with so much violence against tea, that, in several provinces, nearly all the inhabitants abstained from the use of it ; but this first ardor having abated with time, many, either in secret, or even openly, regaled themselves with this beverage, giving it some other name. The British officers themselves, affecting a military contempt for the civil laws, but not less than others mindful of private interest, ordered merchandise from England in their own names, as if destined for the use of their troops, which they secretly introduced into the country.

Notwithstanding these infringements of the general compact, men of integrity, as always happens, faithful to their public professions, persisted in the retrenchments exacted by their pledge, from which there eventually resulted an incalculable prejudice to the English commerce.

The assembly of Massachusetts, having met, about the last of May, immediately resumed the ancient controversy, and sent a message to the governor, purporting that whereas the capital of the province was invested with an armed force by land and sea, and the gates of the State House occupied with cannon by a military guard, the assembly could not deliberate with that freedom and dignity which became them; that they hoped, therefore, this hostile apparatus would be removed from the city and port. The governor answered, briefly, that he had no authority over his majesty's ships that were moored in the port, or over the troops which occupied the city. The assembly replied, that this display of armed force was contrary to law; and, no power being superior to that of arms, they asked, what privilege, or what security, was left to the house? that, where arms prevail, the civil laws are silent; that, therefore, the assembly had resolved to abstain from all deliberation whatever, until it should be re-established in all its authority. The governor adjourned it to Cambridge, a town at a short distance from Boston; and addressed it a requisition for a supply of money for the troops. Without noticing this demand, the assembly answered with new resolutions, which discovered the extreme exasperation of their minds. They represented that the discontent which had been excited in the province by the tax laws, the expectation of more troops, the apprehension that they were to be quartered in private houses, and the people reduced to desperation, were things which demonstrated the necessity of new conventions; that the presence of a standing army in the province in time of peace was a violation of their natural rights, and imminently perilous to public liberty; that governor Bernard, in his letters to the earl of Hillsborough, had recommended new modes of tyranny; that general Gage, in writing that there was no longer a government at Boston, had written the truth; but that this ought not to be attributed to an innocent and loyal people, but, in justice, to those who had violated the laws, and subverted the foundations of the constitution. At length, the governor having returned to the charge for subsidies to subsist the troops, the assembly declared, that, for their own honor, and the interest of the province, they could not consent to grant them. South Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, and New York, following the example of the provinces of Massachusetts and Virginia, took the same resolutions, and refused obedience to the mutiny act.

Meanwhile, the English government, willing to give some indication of a better spirit towards its colonies, announced to them its



determination to propose, at the next session of parliament, the repeal of the duties upon glass, paper, and colors ; thus maintaining only the duty on tea. This new mildness did not satisfy the Americans ; the exception of tea, and the declaration that the law should be abrogated as contrary to the regulations of commerce, persuaded them that it was intended to maintain the right ; and this in reality was the truth. They were apprehensive that the affair might be revived when the present heats were dissipated ; and that the government, then proceeding with more address and vigor, might renew its attempts to establish the authority of taxation forever. The assembly of Virginia protested in stronger terms than at first. Combinations were again formed, as well in this province as in Massachusetts and the greater part of the others ; but they were this time upon the point of being dissolved, by the defection of New York ; this province authorised the importation of every species of English merchandise, excepting such as were charged with some duty.

Governor Bernard was at length succeeded. He departed, without leaving any regret ; which should be attributed to circumstances. He was a man of excellent judgment, sincerely attached to the interests of the province, and of an irreproachable character ; but he was also a defender of the prerogatives of the crown, and wanted the pliancy necessary in these difficult times ; ardent, and totally devoid of dissimulation, he could never abstain from declaring his sentiments ; qualities, none of which, however laudable, can fail to prove unprofitable, or rather pernicious, as well to him that possesses them, as to others, in the political revolutions of states ; for the multitude is either indulged without profit, or opposed with detriment.

Meanwhile, at Boston, things assumed the most serious aspect. The inhabitants supported with extreme repugnance the presence of the soldiers ; and these detested the Bostonians. Hence, mutual insults and provocations occurred.

1770. Finally, on the morning of the 2d of March, as a soldier was passing by the premises of John Gray, a ropemaker, he was assailed with abusive words, and afterwards beaten severely. He soon returned, accompanied by some of his comrades. An affray ensued between the soldiers and the ropemakers, in which the latter had the worst.

The people became greatly exasperated ; and, on the 5th of the same month, between seven and eight o'clock in the evening, a violent tumult broke out. The multitude, armed with clubs, ran towards King street, crying, '*Let us drive out these ribalds ; they have no business here.*' The soldiers who were lodged in the barracks of Murray, were eager to fall upon the populace ; and their officers had the greatest difficulty in restraining them. Meanwhile, it was cried that the town had been set on fire ; the bells pealed alarm, and the crowd increased from all parts. The rioters

rushed furiously towards the custom house ; they approached the sentinel, crying, '*Kill him ! kill him !*' They assaulted him with snow balls, pieces of ice, and whatever they could lay their hand upon. The sentinel, in this conjuncture, having called the guard, captain Preston detached a corporal and a few soldiers, to protect this man, and the chest of the customs, from the popular fury. They marched with their arms loaded, and the captain himself followed ; they encountered a band of the populace, led by a mulatto named Attucks, who brandished their clubs, and pelted them with snow balls. The maledictions, the imprecations, the execrations, of the multitude, were horrible. In the midst of a torrent of invectives from every quarter, the military was challenged to fire. The detachment was surrounded ; and the populace advanced to the points of their bayonets. The soldiers appeared like statues ; the cries, the howlings, the menaces, the violent din of bells, still sounding the alarm, increased the confusion and the horrors of these moments ; at length the mulatto and twelve of his companions, pressing forward, environed the soldiers, and striking their muskets with their clubs, cried to the multitude ; '*Be not afraid, they dare not fire ; why do you hesitate, why do you not kill them, why not crush them at once ?*' The mulatto lifted his arm against captain Preston, and having turned one of the muskets, he seized the bayonet with his left hand, as if he intended to execute his threat. At this moment, confused cries were heard, '*The wretches dare not fire.*' Firing succeeds ; Attucks is slain. Two other discharges follow. Three were killed, five severely wounded ; several others slightly ; the greater part, persons that were passing by chance ; or quiet spectators of this scene. Eight soldiers only fired, and none more than once. The populace dispersed, but returned soon after to carry off the dead and wounded.

Meanwhile, the whole city was become a scene of incredible confusion, the crowd was seen hurrying through all the streets. The sound of drums, and cries to arms, were heard from every quarter. The citizens flocked together by thousands. The lieutenant-governor, Hutchinson, being arrived upon the spot, said in a menacing tone to captain Preston, '*Why have you fired without the orders of the civil magistrate ?*' The other answered, '*We have been insulted.*' But no more was said, either by the one or by the other ; this being neither the proper time, nor place, for an inquest.

Hutchinson made his way through the press of the multitude, and they were persuaded, by his efforts, to disperse.

The following morning, at a very early hour, the people reassembled. A message was despatched to the governor, declaring in the name of all the inhabitants, that without the immediate removal of the soldiers, it would be impossible to restore the tranquillity of the city, or to prevent the effusion of blood. After repeated menaces,

on the one part, and many evasions on the other, the troops were removed to castle William. Captain Preston, with all the detachment he commanded, were committed to prison.

It was resolved to celebrate the obsequies of the slain, in the most public and solemn manner; not that they were persons of note, but to testify and excite the regrets and compassion of the people, towards those who had perished miserably by the hands of British soldiers, in open violation of civil liberty. On the morning of the 8th, the shops were closed; all the bells of Boston, of Charlestown, and of Roxbury, towns of the vicinity, were tolled. The processions, attending each corpse, proceeded to King street, and met in the same place, where three days before, the individuals whose memory they honored thus had received their death. Whence the funeral train, followed by an immense multitude of people, and a long file of coaches, belonging to the most distinguished citizens, moved, in profound silence, and with every mark of grief and indignation, through the main street, to the place of sepulture, where the bodies were deposited in the same tomb.

The trial of captain Preston, and the soldiers, was afterwards taken up. John Adams, and Josiah Quincy, two principal chiefs of the opposition, in Massachusetts, and lawyers of the greatest celebrity, made their defence, with singular eloquence and ability. The captain and six of the eight soldiers accused were acquitted; two were declared guilty of homicide, without premeditation. A thing truly remarkable, that in the midst of such a commotion, and at the moment when the effervescence of minds were so extreme, this judgment, so little conformable to the wishes of the multitude, should have been pronounced. So admirable were the judicial regulations established in these countries, and so firm was the resolution of the judges to obey the law, in defiance of all influence whatsoever! Adams and Quincy lost by their magnanimity something of their favor, at the time, with the people. Notwithstanding the issue of the trial, the greater number persisted in believing that the wrong was on the part of the soldiers, and that their conduct was the more barbarous, as it had not been provoked. Thus, at least, the leaders of party had an interest that it should be supposed. These opinions contributed not a little to foment and even exasperate the hatred and animosities already so intense in all parts of America.

While the minds of the Americans were thus excited to greater unanimity, and rage fermented in every heart, those half resolutions were taken in England, which were the evident cause, on her part, of the fatal issue of this crisis. Several causes contributed, at once, to produce this result; the prejudices and the incapacity of the ministers; the unfaithful reports of the agents of the state, in America; and, perhaps, it was no less the work of Benjamin Franklin, who, residing at London, as the agent of the colonies,



deceived the ministers, as he used to say, by telling them the truth. So corrupt, he added, were the men in power, that they reputed his sincerity artifice, and the truth deception. Hence they blindly abandoned themselves to illusions, that made them see things different from what they were in reality, and with a bandage over their eyes, they trod incessantly upon the brink of a precipice.

The 5th of March, lord North, who had been appointed by the king, prime minister, proposed, in a speech to the house of commons, the repeal of taxes, excepting that upon tea. Notwithstanding the opposition of many members, who insisted that the Americans would not be satisfied with this partial repeal, the proposition was finally approved by a great majority. The predictions of the minority were but too well verified in America; the continuance of the duty on tea had the effect to keep alive the same discontents. The combinations were dissolved, however, so far as related to the importation of merchandise not taxed; the article of tea alone continued to be prohibited. The fermentation maintained itself principally in the province of Massachusetts, the local authorities of which were incessantly engaged in altercations with the officers of the crown.

On the whole, how many motives combined to create in America an insurmountable resistance to the designs of the government! On the one hand, the obstinacy inherent to man, rendered still more inflexible by obstacles, and the blood which had flowed, as also by the love of liberty; on the other, the species of triumph already obtained by perseverance, and the opinion resulting from it, that not from any spirit of indulgence, but a consciousness of inferior force, the government had consented to revocations. The Americans were, besides, persuaded that the rumors which daily increased, of a war with France, would lay the British ministers under the necessity of conceding all their demands; and finally, they well knew they had powerful protectors, both within and without the walls of parliament. Such were the public occurrences in the colonies, during the year 1770.

1771. In the course of the following year there happened few that are worthy of memory; only the ordinary altercations continued between the assembly of Massachusetts and Hutchinson, who had been appointed governor. All the provinces persisted in open resistance to laws of taxation and of commerce; smuggling was no longer secretly but openly transacted. The officers of the customs had fallen into utter contempt. In Boston, a tidesman of the customs, having attempted to detain a vessel for breach of the acts of trade, was seized by the people, stripped, and carted through the principal streets of the city, besmeared with tar, and then covered with feathers. There was some tumult, also, at Providence; the inhabitants having plundered and burnt the king's ship *Wasp*.

1772. The government then reflected, that in such a distempered state of minds, it could not hope to repress the boldness of the Americans, and secure the observation of the laws, without resorting to some more effectual means. It resolved, among others, to render the officers of the crown totally independent of the colonial assemblies; to effect this, it decided that the salaries and stipends of the governors, judges, and other principal officers of the colonies, should, in future, be fixed by the crown, and paid without the intervention of the colonial assemblies. Immediately new commotions broke out in America, and particularly in the province of Massachusetts, where it was declared that those who should consent to be paid by the crown, independently of the general assembly, should be deemed enemies to the constitution, and supporters of arbitrary government. Thus, all measures taken in England, to vanquish resistance, and reestablish submission in America, not being sustained by an armed force sufficient to coerce, tended to a result absolutely contrary.

And if the government meditated the display of greater vigor, the Americans were occupied with the same thoughts. They were not ignorant, that in popular agitations, nothing tends more directly to the desired object, than having chiefs to direct the movements, ascertain the opinions of all the members of the confederacy, and act with concert in their respective operations. Accordingly, the inhabitants of Massachusetts, following the suggestion of Samuel Adams and James Warren, of Plymouth, formed a council of the partisans of a new order of things, and established a species of political hierarchy, by creating committees of correspondence in all the cities and towns of the province; all referring to the central committee of Boston. The chiefs were six in number, each of whom commanded a division; the chiefs of a division, in like manner, commanded a subdivision, and a movement being given by the first, was communicated progressively, and without delay, to the whole province. These committees, or clubs, were composed of individuals of different characters; some entered them mechanically, and because they saw others do it; some from attachment to the public cause; others to acquire authority, to gratify their ambition, or their avarice; others, finally, because they believed the general good is the supreme law, and that all the maxims of private morals should bend to this sovereign rule. All were resolved, or said they were resolved, to secure the liberty of their country, or part with life in the glorious attempt.

The governor affirmed, that the greater part of them were Atheists, and contemners of all religion; which made him wonder, he said, to see *deacons*, and other members of the church, who professed a scrupulous devotion, in league with characters of such a description.

This new political order, instituted by the few, was soon adopted by the whole province; and every city, village, or town, had its committee, which corresponded with the others. Their deliberations and decrees were considered as the will and voice of the people.

The minds of the inhabitants were thus regularly inflamed and prepared for a general explosion. The other provinces imitated this example.

The first occasion to act was offered to the committee of Boston, by the determination of the government, to charge itself with the salaries of the judges. Very spirited resolutions were framed, and distributed profusely throughout the provinces. The committee accompanied them with a vehement letter, in which they exhorted the inhabitants to rouse from their long slumber, to stand erect, and shake off indolence; '*now, whilst,*' as it was said in the turgid style of that epoch, '*the iron hand of oppression is daily tearing the choicest fruits from the fair tree of liberty.*' The effervescence became as extreme as universal.

1773. Meanwhile, an event occurred, which supplied fresh fuel to this fire, which already menaced a general conflagration. Doctor Franklin, agent at London of several colonies, and particularly of Massachusetts, had found means, it is not known how, to obtain, from the office of state, the letters of governor Hutchinson, of lieutenant-governor Oliver, and of some others adhering to the party of government in America. In these despatches, they acquainted the ministers with all that passed in the colonies; and delivered their opinions with great freedom. They represented, that the members of the American opposition were generally persons of little weight, audacious and turbulent, but few in number; that they were even without influence with the multitude; that the mildness and forbearance of the government had been the sole cause of their boldness; that if it should take vigorous measures, all would return to their duty; they recommended, especially, that the public officers should receive their stipends from the crown. Franklin transmitted these letters to Massachusetts; they were printed and distributed copiously in all parts of the province. It is easy to imagine the ebullition they produced.

While the inhabitants of the colonies were thus exquisitely sensible to whatever they deemed hostile to their rights, resenting with equal indignation the most trivial as the most serious attack, a resolution was taken in England, which, if it had been executed, would have given the victory to the government, and reduced the Americans to the condition for which they demonstrated such an extreme repugnance. Their obstinacy, in refusing to pay the duty on tea, rendered the smuggling of it very frequent; and their resolutions against using it, although observed by many with little fidelity, had greatly diminished the importation into the colonies of this commo-



dity. Meanwhile, an immense quantity of it was accumulated in the warehouses of the East India company in England. This company petitioned the king to suppress the duty of three pence per pound upon its introduction into America, and to continue the six pence upon its exportation from the ports of England; a measure which would have given the government an advantage of three pence the pound, and relieved the Americans from a law they abhorred. The government, more solicitous about the right than the revenue, would not consent. The company, however, received permission to transport tea, free of all duty, from Great Britain to America; and to introduce it there, on paying a duty of three pence.

Here it was no longer the small vessels of private merchants, who went to vend tea, for their own account, in the ports of the colonies; but, on the contrary, ships of an enormous burthen, that transported immense quantities of this commodity, which, by the aid of the public authority, might easily be landed, and amassed in suitable magazines. Accordingly, the company sent to its agents at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, six hundred chests of tea, and a proportionate number to Charleston, and other maritime cities of the American continent.

The colonists were now arrived at the decisive moment, when they must cast the die, and determine their cause in regard to parliamentary taxes; for if the tea was permitted to be landed, it would be sold, and the duty consequently paid. It was therefore resolved to exert every effort to prevent the landing. Even in England, individuals were not wanting who fanned this fire; some from a desire to baffle the government, others from motives of private interest, and jealousy at the opportunity offered the East India company to make immense profits to their prejudice. They wrote, therefore, to America, encouraging a strenuous resistance. They represented to the colonists, that this would prove their last trial; and if they should triumph now, their liberty was secured forever; if they should yield, they must bow their necks to the yoke of slavery! The materials were too well prepared and disposed, not to kindle. At Philadelphia, those to whom the teas of the company were intended to be consigned, were induced by persuasion, or constrained by menaces, to promise not in any mode to accept the proffered consignment. At New York, captain Sears and Macdougall, daring and enterprising men, effected a concert of will between the smugglers, the merchants and the Sons of Liberty. Pamphlets, suited to the conjuncture, were daily distributed; and nothing was left unattempted, by the popular leaders, to obtain their purpose. The factors of the company were obliged to resign their agency, and return to England. In Boston, the general voice declared the time was come to face the storm. 'Why do we wait?' they exclaimed; 'soon or late, we must engage in conflict with England. Hundreds of years may roll away, before

the ministers can have perpetrated as many violations of our rights as they have committed within a few years. The opposition is formed ; it is general ; it remains for us to seize the occasion. The more we delay, the more strength is acquired by the ministers. Do you not see how many arrogant youths they send us, to exercise the offices of the revenue, to receive enormous salaries, and to infect us with their luxury and corruption ? They will take American wives, and will become powerful instruments of ministerial tyranny. This is the moment to strike a decisive blow, while our cause is strong in hope ; now is the time to prove our courage, or be disgraced with our brethren of the other colonies, who have their eyes fixed upon us, and will be prompt in their succours, if we show ourselves faithful and firm.'

The factors were urged to renounce their agency ; but they refused, and took refuge in the fortress. Immediately after, captain Hall arrived in port, with a cargo of more than an hundred chests of tea. The people instantly assembled, in great fury, and sent notice to Rotch, the consignee of this cargo, that if he valued his safety and interest, he must abstain from receiving the tea, and caution captain Hall against attempting to land it. They also placed a guard on Griffin's wharf, near which the ship was moored. It was agreed, that a strict watch should be kept ; that, in case of any insult during the night, the bell should be rung immediately ; that some persons should be always in readiness to bear the intelligence of what might occur to the neighboring towns, and to call in the assistance of the country people.

The committees of correspondence performed their duty with activity. Captains Bruce and Coffin having arrived, with other cargoes of tea, they were ordered to cast anchor near captain Hall. The people from the country arrived in great numbers ; the inhabitants of the town assembled. Rotch was requested to demand a certificate of clearance, that captain Hall might put back to sea with his ship.

Things appeared hastening to a disastrous issue. In this conjuncture, Josiah Quincy, a man of great influence in the colony, of a vigorous and cultivated genius, and strenuously opposed to ministerial enterprises, wishing to apprise his fellow citizens of the importance of the crisis, and direct their attention to results, demanded silence, and said, ' This ardor, and this impetuosity, which are manifested within these walls, are not those that are requisite to conduct us to the object we have in view ; these may cool, may abate, may vanish, like a flitting shade. Quite other spirits, quite other efforts, are essential to our salvation. Greatly will he deceive himself, who shall think, that with cries, with exclamations, with popular resolutions, we can hope to triumph, in this conflict, and vanquish our inveterate foes. Their malignity is implacable,—their thirst of vengeance insatiable. They have their allies, their accomplices, even in the midst of us,—



even in the bosom of this innocent country ; and who is ignorant of the power of those who have conspired our ruin?—who knows not their artifices ? Imagine not, therefore, that you can bring this controversy to a happy conclusion, without the most strenuous, the most arduous, the most terrible conflict. Consider attentively the difficulty of the enterprise, and the uncertainty of the issue. Reflect and ponder, even ponder well, before you embrace the measures which are to involve this country in the most perilous enterprise the world has witnessed.'

The question was put, whether the landing of the tea should be opposed ? and carried in the affirmative unanimously, Rotch was then requested to demand of the governor a permit to pass the castle. The latter answered, haughtily, that for the honor of the laws, and from duty towards the king, he could not grant the permit until the vessel was regularly cleared. A violent commotion immediately ensued. A person disguised after the manner of the Indians, who was in the gallery, shouted, at this juncture, the cry of war ; the meeting was dissolved in the twinkling of an eye. The multitude rushed in mass to Griffin's wharf. About twenty persons, also disguised as Indians, then made their appearance ; all either masters of ships, carpenters or caulkers. They went on board the ships laden with tea. In less than two hours, three hundred and forty chests were staved, and emptied in the sea. They were not interrupted ; the surrounding multitude on shore served them as a safe guard. The affair was conducted without tumult ; no damage was done to the ships, or to any other effects whatever. When the operation was terminated, every one repaired to his own habitation, either in the city or in the country.

In New York and in Philadelphia, as no person could be found that would venture to receive the tea, the ships of the company, which had arrived in these ports, returned, with their cargoes, to England. In the former city, however, captain Chamber having on board his ship some chests of tea for account of a private merchant, they were thrown into the sea. At Charleston, the tea was permitted to be landed ; but, having been deposited in certain humid cellars, it perished.

1774. The news of these events having come to the ears of the ministers, they determined to take more vigorous measures. The province of Massachusetts, and especially the city of Boston, had always stood foremost in resistance, had been the scene of the greatest disorders, and appeared the head-quarters of sedition. The ministers therefore resolved to distinguish them by the first marks of their displeasure. They hoped that the principal agitators being thus repressed, the rest would voluntarily return to submission. Considering, also, that the city of Boston was very flourishing ; that it was accounted not only one of the most commercial cities of the conti-



ment, but even considered as the emporium of all the provinces of New England; it is not surprising that they should have taken the resolution to deprive it entirely of its commerce, by means of a rigorous interdict, and turn it all towards some other maritime city of this coast. It was thought, likewise, that the civil magistrates, who, according to the statutes of the province, were chosen by the people, ought, for the future, to be appointed by the government; that, placed thus entirely under its influence, they might no longer be inclined to favor the popular tumults, but become, from duty as well as inclination, interested to suppress them, by requiring the necessary assistance from the military authorities; for it was seen that the late tumults owed their origin and alarming increase to the inactivity of the military, which, according to the established laws, could not interfere without the requisition of the civil magistrates, from which they had purposely abstained. It was also in deliberation to pass a law for enabling the soldiers to execute with perfect security the orders they might receive for the suppression of tumults, without any fear of consequences. The ministers expected thus to create divisions, to render the civil magistrates absolutely dependent on the government, and to reestablish the soldiery in that independence which is essential to the complete exertion and efficacy of their force. But whoever has a competent share of natural capacity, and a slight acquaintance with political affairs, will readily see how wide were these resolutions of the British ministers from corresponding with the urgency of circumstances. Is it not surprising, that a government like that of England, which at all times had exhibited the evidences of an extreme ability, and of singular energy, having before its eyes the example of the revolutions of Switzerland and of Holland, well knowing the inflexible pertinacity inherent to the American people, and the astonishing unity of sentiments they had recently manifested in all their movements, is it not even astonishing, that this government could have brought itself to believe, that the blocking up a port and change of some old statutes, things that tended more to irritate than coerce, would suffice to curb such headlong fury, vanquish such unyielding obstinacy, dissolve a league so formidable, and reestablish obedience where rebellion had already commenced its impetuous career? The display of a formidable force, and not the reforms of charters, presented the only mode of promptly terminating the contest, maintaining the ancient order of things, and restoring tranquillity in America.

The ministers ought to have been the more prompt in their military preparations, as they should not have been ignorant that France secretly encouraged these commotions, and was no stranger to their ultimate object. Arms were not wanting; they abounded. Due forecast, or the requisite vigor, were indeed wanting in the British councils. Twenty or thirty thousand men, sent to America immedi-

ately after the commencement of the disorders, would indubitably have surmounted all resistance, and reestablished obedience ; which it was idle to expect from a few modifications of the laws. England, in this instance, appeared to have forgotten the familiar aphorism, that wars, to be short, must be vigorous and terrible.

Nor could it be alleged, that the principles of the British constitution would not have permitted the sending of a regular army into a British province, and in time of peace ; for, if the parliament subverted the fundamental statutes of the province of Massachusetts, and destroyed the most essential bases of the constitution itself, by the laws it was about to enact, it could also have authorised the presence of an efficient standing army. But lord Bute, the favorite counsellor of the king, and author of most of the secret resolutions, was a man whose passions were more remarkable than his sagacity ; and lord North, the prime minister, was rather an accurate and laborious financier, than a statesman. He had formed about him a council of the most celebrated lawyers of the kingdom, to have their advice upon the present state of affairs ; and too many examples attest, what is to be expected from these doctors, when, with their schemes, and sophistical refinements, they undertake to interfere in the government of states, and to direct the revolutions of nations. Good armies, large and vigorous measures, are the only means of success in such circumstances. In critical moments, the direction of affairs should be confided to men of firmness and decision, not to those whose cautious timidity can venture only half measures ; and who are incapable of embracing a magnanimous policy.

Lord North, on the 14th of March, proposed in the house of commons a bill, of the following purport ; that, dating from the 1st of June, 1774, it should be prohibited to land or discharge, lade or embark, any goods, wares, or merchandise, whatsoever, at the town or within the harbor of Boston ; and that the officers of the customs should be transferred immediately to the port of Salem. The minister remarked, that this law was no less necessary than just ; as from this city had issued all the mischief which disturbed the colonies, and all the venom that infected America.

‘Thrice already have the officers of the customs been prevented from discharging their duty. At the epoch of the disorders, the inhabitants, instead of interfering to appease them, maintained regular guards, day and night, to prevent the landing of tea and other British merchandise. Nay, more ; still fearing it might be landed, with an excess of popular insolence, absolutely unheard of, they have thrown into the sea the tea of the East India company. The measure proposed is more severe in appearance than in reality ; for the Bostonians may cause it to cease, by yielding due respect to the laws. A few frigates stationed at the entrance of the harbor, will be sufficient to carry it into effect, without calling in the aid of the military.

It is now quite time to assume a firm attitude, and to take such vigorous steps as shall intimately persuade the Americans that England has not only the power, but also the will, to maintain them in obedience. In a word, that she is unalterably determined to protect her laws, her commerce, her magistrates and her own dignity.'

The project of the minister was opposed by the agent of Massachusetts, named Bollan, and by several orators of the house of commons, among whom Burke and Dowdeswell appeared the most animated;

'It is wished, then, to condemn the accused without a hearing,—to punish indiscriminately the innocent with the guilty! You will thus irrevocably alienate the hearts of the colonists from the mother country. Before the adoption of so violent a measure, the principal merchants of the kingdom should at least be consulted. The bill is unjust; since it bears only upon the city of Boston, whilst it is notorious that all America is in flames; that the cities of Philadelphia, of New York, and all the maritime towns of the continent, have exhibited the same disorders. You are contending for a matter which the Bostonians will not give up quietly. They cannot, by such means, be made to bow to the authority of ministers; on the contrary, you will find their obstinacy confirmed, and their fury exasperated. The acts of resistance in their city have not been confined to the populace alone; but men of the first rank and opulent fortune, in the place, have openly countenanced them. One city in proscription, and the rest in rebellion, can never be a remedial measure for general disturbances. Have you considered whether you have troops and ships sufficient to reduce the people of the whole American continent to your devotion? It was the duty of your governor, and not of men without arms, to suppress the tumults. If this officer has not demanded the proper assistance from the military commanders, why punish the innocent for the fault and the negligence of the officers of the crown? Who is ignorant that certain foreign powers wait only for an occasion to move against England? And will England now offer them this object of their desires? The resistance is general in all parts of America; you must therefore let it govern itself by its own internal policy, or make it subservient to all your laws, by an exertion of all the forces of the kingdom. These partial counsels are well suited to irritate, not to subjugate.'

Notwithstanding all these arguments, the ministers obtained an immense majority of the suffrages; and the bill passed, almost without opposition.

A few days after, lord North proposed another law, which went to subvert entirely the fundamental statutes of Massachusetts, by investing the crown with the power to appoint the counsellors, judges and magistrates of all denominations; with the clause that each should hold his office during the pleasure of the king. Thus the people of Mas-



sachusetts no longer had authority to interfere, either directly or by their representatives, in the administration of the province, which became, therefore, completely dependent on the government; as the latter controlled, at will, the measures of all the civil authorities.

The ministers alleged, that in doing this, no more was attempted than to place that province on the same footing as several others; that the government did not, at present, possess a sufficient share of power,—too much being lodged in the hands of the people;

‘If such a state of things be suffered to continue, it will no longer be possible to repress the seditious, and prevent the repetition of disorders. The magistrates, so long as they are chosen by the people, will never attempt to resist them; but, on the contrary, will endeavor to flatter their caprices, than which nothing can be imagined more fatal, or more contrary to the public repose. In this province, all is confusion and uproar. In desperate cases, the most active remedies are necessary. Such is the crisis of the moment, that we must either renounce all supremacy over America, or curb with more effectual means these unruly spirits; and, in such an extremity, what is the use of cavils and subtle distinctions?’

But the members of the opposition, and the agents of Massachusetts, represented, on their part, that the measure proposed was flagrantly tyrannical; that this alone, setting aside the affair of taxation, was more than sufficient to excite the greatest commotions in America.

‘What can the Americans believe, but that England wishes to despoil them of all liberty, of all franchises; and, by the destruction of their charters, to reduce them to a state of the most abject slavery? It is a thing of no little peril, however, to undertake the reformation of charters. The princes of the house of Stuart found it so; who lost the crown in attempting to gratify so fatal an ambition. Great Britain has always held similar proceedings in just abhorrence; and how can she now herself pretend to imitate them? Hitherto the Americans have only complained of the loss of one of their immunities; but, at present it is proposed to usurp them all. The other colonies will believe, that what is commenced in Massachusetts, will soon be introduced in each of them; and thus, it cannot be doubted, they will all combine to oppose such attempts in the outset. As the Americans are no less ardently attached to liberty than the English themselves, can it even be hoped they will submit to such exorbitant usurpations,—to such portentous resolutions?’

These, with other considerations were advanced, by those who advocated the American cause; but all was in vain. The bill was passed, by an immense majority.

Lord North then proposed a third, by which it was provided, that in case any individual should be questioned, in the province of Massachusetts, for homicide, or other capital offence, and it should ap-

pear to the governor, that the act was done in the execution of the law, or in assisting any magistrate to suppress tumults, and that a just and impartial trial was not to be expected in the province, the same governor should have authority to send the accused to take his trial in another colony, or, if expedient, even in Great Britain. This act was to be in force, for the term of four years.

The minister insisted in his discourse, that, without the measure proposed, those whose office it was to enforce the execution of the laws, would be very remiss in the discharge of this duty, having no hope to find, in case of need, an impartial tribunal to judge them. 'It is impossible, without inconsistency, to commit the trial of such persons to those against whom, in obedience to the laws, they may have acted. The bill now submitted will crown the resolutions taken with respect to the colonies; your work, without this, would remain unfinished and defective. We must consider, that every thing we have, that is valuable to us, is at stake; and the question at issue is very shortly this, Whether the Americans shall continue the subjects of Great Britain or not? I feel assured of a good result, when all these new arrangements shall be carried properly into execution.'

But colonel Barre, and Edmund Burke, opposed the minister with great warmth; and spoke, in substance, as follows; 'This is indeed the most extraordinary resolution that was ever heard in the parliament of England. It offers new encouragement to military insolence, already so insupportable; which is the more odious, in the present case, as the soldiers are expected to act against their own fellow citizens! By this law, the Americans are deprived of a right which belongs to every human creature,—that of demanding justice before a tribunal composed of impartial judges. Even captain Preston, who, in their own city of Boston had shed the blood of citizens, found among them a fair trial, and equitable judges. It is an idea so extravagant, this of taking the trial over the Atlantic seas, three thousand miles, to Great Britain, where the prisoner may call upon and subpoena as many witnesses as he pleases, that it is hard to conceive how it could have entered the brain of any man in his senses. Instead of stimulating the audacity of regular troops, on the contrary, the provincial militia should be encouraged, that they may serve as a shield and a bulwark against them in favor of civil liberty. To approve this law is equivalent to a declaration of war against the colonies. Let us but look a little into our behavior. When we are insulted by Spain, we negotiate; when we dispute with our brethren of America, we prepare our ships and our troops to attack them. In the one house of parliament, *'we have passed the Rubicon;'* in the other, *'delenda est Carthago.'* But I see nothing in the present measures, but inhumanity, injustice, and wickedness; and I fear that the hand of heaven will fall down on this unhappy country, with the same degree of vengeance we desire to wreak on our brethren of

America. And what is the unpardonable offence the Americans have been guilty of? Of no other but that of refusing their consent to an act that was contrary to the written laws, and to the unalterable principles of the British constitution. And if England herself, in certain ancient times, had not resisted such arbitrary laws, should we have enjoyed our present free government, or should we have existed as a house of commons here this day?"

Lord Germaine, having risen, spoke thus on the side of ministers; 'If I believed that the measure in question could be deemed unjust and tyrannical, I certainly should not undertake to support it against such vehement attacks. But as I think it, on the contrary, not only just, but seasonable and necessary, I shall freely defend it, even at the risk, in so doing, of wounding the delicate ears of the orators seated opposite. The trial of the military on this side of the water has been much objected to. What is it, sir, but a protection of innocence? Can any thing be more desirable to generous minds, than that? America, at this instant is nothing but anarchy and confusion. Have they any one measure, but what depends upon the will of a lawless multitude? Where are the courts of justice? Shut up. Where are your council? Where is your governor? All of them intimidated by the infuriate rabble. Can you expect, in the midst of such tumults, in the midst of such ferocious anarchy, that these men could have a fair trial? No; assuredly not. It has been observed, that we negotiated, however, with Spain. But the Spaniards disavowed the fact, and acknowledged our right with respect to the Falkland Islands; whereas, the contumacious Americans continue to resist and deride us! It is objected, that these proceedings are to deprive persons of their natural right. Let me ask, of what natural right? Whether that of smuggling, or of throwing tea overboard?—or of another natural right, which is not paying their debts? But surely this bill does not destroy any of their civil rights. You have given the innocent man a fair trial. It is not a military government that is established; but the alteration of a civil one, by which it is made conformable to existing circumstances. If peace, if obedience to the laws and legitimate authorities, are still to be reestablished in the province of Massachusetts, this is the only measure that can conduct us to a result so desirable.

The question being put, it was resolved in the affirmative; an hundred and twenty-seven voted in favor of the bill, and only twenty-four against.

Notwithstanding the resolutions recently taken, which were to produce such salutary effects in the colonies, the government reflected that the Americans might possibly proceed to the last extremities, and thus render it necessary to use open force to reduce them; the ministers therefore thought it might be well to secure a place near the colonies, where they could make the necessary preparations, and



disembark, upon occasion, their troops and munitions of war, without obstacles, without discontent on the part of the inhabitants, and, especially, without these eternal complaints of the violation of rights and of statutes. For such a purpose, no province appeared more suitable than Canada, which, from its situation, was well adapted to overawe the colonies where the late tumults had arisen. But, to facilitate this design, it was requisite to satisfy the Canadians, who, till very lately, having been French, were not yet accustomed to the laws of their new masters, and were even much inclined to detest them. The Canadian nobility, heretofore possessed of great authority in their province, complained that they had no longer so considerable a part in public affairs, as they had enjoyed under the French domination. The people, professing generally the Catholic religion, were dissatisfied because they were not permitted to partake of all the privileges and civil advantages enjoyed by Protestant subjects.

These motives determined the government to extend the authority of the nobility, and establish a perfect equality of rights between the Catholics and Protestants. Accordingly, upon the motion of lord North, the parliament passed an act, establishing, in the province of Canada, a legislative council, invested with all powers, except that of imposing taxes. It was provided, that its members should be appointed by the crown, and continue in authority during its pleasure; that the Canadian subjects professing the Catholic faith, might be called to sit in this council; that the Catholic clergy, with the exception of the regular orders, should be secured in the enjoyment of their possessions, and of their tithes towards all those who professed the same religion; that the French laws, without jury, should be reestablished, preserving, however, the English laws, with trial by jury, in criminal cases. It was also added, in order to furnish the ministers with a larger scope for their designs, that the limits of Canada should be extended so as to embrace the territory situated between the lakes, the river Ohio and the Mississippi. Thus, it was hoped, that, being flanked by a province reduced to a state of absolute dependence on the government, and with this bridle, as it were, in the mouth, the Americans would no longer dare to renew their accustomed sallies.

In the last place, a bill was proposed and passed, which authorised, in case of exigency, the quartering of soldiers in the houses of citizens.

These new laws were received in England with universal applause; as a general and violent indignation had been excited there, by the insolence and enormities of the Americans. The bill of Quebec, however, as that of Canada was called, found a much less cordial reception. It even occasioned much murmuring among the English people. 'The other laws,' it was said, 'are just and proper, because

they tend to establish English authority over the seditious ; but this is an attempt against the national liberty and religion.'

Governor Hutchinson, become odious to the Americans, was succeeded by general Gage, a man much known, and highly respected, in America. He was invested with the most ample authority, to pardon and remit, at discretion, all treason or felony, and even all murders or crimes, of whatever denomination, as also all forfeitures and penalties whatsoever, which the inhabitants of Massachusetts might have incurred.

An universal curiosity prevailed, to know the result of the new measures taken by the English ministers, and what would be the issue of a contest, in which all the authority of a most ancient and powerful kingdom, formidable even from the terror of its name, and the recent glory of its arms, combatted against the obstinacy of a people naturally headstrong, and attached to their privileges almost to infatuation. Nor did the course of events remain long in doubt. For, upon the arrival in Boston of the news of the port bill, a meeting of the inhabitants was immediately called ; in which, the act was declared to be unjust and cruel ; they made their appeal to God and to the world. A vast number of copies of the act were printed and dispersed throughout the colonies ; and, to make the deeper impression on the multitude, the copies were printed on mourning paper, bordered with black lines ; and they were cried through the country, as the '*barbarous, cruel, sanguinary and inhuman murder.*' In many places, it was burnt with great solemnity by the assembled multitude.

In the midst of this effervescence, general Gage arrived at Boston ; where, notwithstanding the general agitation, he was received with distinction.

The committee of correspondence perceived all the importance of uniting in a common sentiment the committees of the other colonies ; but they also felt the constraint of their present position, since the particular interests of Boston were now especially concerned. They wrote, therefore, with a modest reserve, and their letters merely expressed a hope, that the city of Boston would be considered as suffering for the common cause.

The flames of this combustion were soon communicated to all parts of the continent ; there was not a place that did not convene its assembly, that did not despatch its letters, animated with the same spirit ; the praises, the congratulations, the encouragements, addressed to the Bostonians, were without end. The province of Virginia was also on this occasion prompt to give the signal and the example ; its assembly was in session when the news arrived of the Boston port bill. It was immediately resolved, that the first of June, the time prefixed for the law to take effect, should be observed by all as a day of fasting, prayer and humiliation ; that on this day, the divine mercy should be supplicated, that it would deign to avert the

calamities which threatened the Americans with the loss of their rights, and a civil war; that it would inspire all hearts and all minds with the same affections and with the same thoughts, that they might effectually concur in the defence of their liberty. The other cities followed this example. The popular orators in the public halls, and the ministers of religion in the churches, pronounced discourses adapted to inflame the people against the authors of the usurpations, and all the evils of which the Bostonians were the victims. The governor thought it prudent to dissolve the assembly of Virginia. But prior to their separation, they contracted a league, by which they declared, that the attempt by coercion, to induce one of the colonies to consent to an arbitrary tax, was to be considered as an outrage common to all; that in such a case, it was just and necessary that all should unite, with one consent, to oppose such pernicious, such detestable counsels. Not content with this, they adopted a resolution, which was the most important of all; it purported that all the colonies should be invited to choose deputies, to convene every year, in a general congress, to deliberate in common upon the general interests of America.

In Boston, the general assembly of the province having met, the new governor informed the house, that on the first of June, in conformity to the port bill, their sittings must be transferred to Salem. But perceiving, that, to avoid this translation, they hastened to terminate the affairs in deliberation, he adjourned them himself to Salem, for the 7th of June. When reassembled in this place, the house immediately took into consideration the events of the day. The leaders, among whom Samuel Adams was the most active, had prepared the resolutions. The assembly decreed that a general congress should be convoked; they elected the deputies that were to represent the province in the same, and made provision for their expenses.

Maryland held its assembly at Annapolis; South Carolina, at Charleston; Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia; Connecticut, at New London; Rhode Island, at Newport; and, in a word, all the provinces, from New Hampshire to South Carolina, pursued one course; all adhered to the measure of holding a general congress, and elected their deputies accordingly. No province sent less than two, or more than seven representatives. The city of Philadelphia being rich, flourishing and populous, and forming a central point between the provinces of the north and those of the south, was chosen for the seat of the general congress.

The associations against British commerce were also resumed with great spirit; the provincial assemblies, the town meetings, and the committees of correspondence, all cooperated, with admirable effect, in promoting the same object. Had it been possible to increase the animosity and indignation already kindled by the Boston port bill, they must have redoubled at the news of the two other acts, con-



cerning the civil administration of Massachusetts, and that of Quebec. The Boston committee of correspondence originated a motion, upon this occasion of great moment; it was to form a general combination, which should be called '*The League and Covenant*' in imitation of the leagues and covenants made in the times of civil wars in England. The covenanters were required to obligate themselves, in the presence of God, and promise in the most solemn and religious manner, to cease all commerce with England, dating from the last of the ensuing month of August, until the late detestable acts should be repealed, and the colony reinstated in all its rights, franchises, liberty and privileges; not to purchase or use, after this term, any British goods, wares or merchandise whatsoever; and to abstain from all commerce or traffic whatever with those who should use or introduce them, or refuse to enter into the solemn league. Finally, a menace was added, which, in a period of such universal excitement, was sufficient to intimidate, that the names of those should be published who should refuse to give this authentic proof of their attachment to the rights and liberty of their country. If the resolution was bold, its execution was not tardy. The articles of the league were transmitted, by circulars, to the other provinces, with invitation to the inhabitants to annex their names. Either voluntarily or out of fear, an infinite number subscribed in all the provinces, and particularly in those of New England. The citizens of Philadelphia alone discovered a repugnance to the measure; not that they felt less abhorrence for the proceedings of England, or were less attached to their privileges; but a total suspension of commerce with Great Britain, appeared to them a thing of so great importance, and so prejudicial to many industrious inhabitants of their city, that they could not but hesitate as to its adoption. They desired, therefore, to leave it for the determination of the general congress; promising to execute scrupulously, whatever might be the resolutions of that assembly.

General Gage, astonished and inflamed at the very name of league, a name so full of dread for the ears of an officer of the crown of England, issued a proclamation, declaring it to be an illegal and criminal combination, and contrary to the allegiance due to the king. But these were mere words. The people of Massachusetts published, on their part, that the declaration of the governor was of itself tyrannical; they contended, that no authority could prevent the subjects from consulting together, and forming conventions for the maintainance of their rights, in cases of oppression.

Thus the laws upon which the British ministers had rested their hopes of dividing the counsels, appeasing the tumults, securing obedience, and reestablishing tranquillity in America, were those which originated more union, greater commotions, more open revolt, and a more determined spirit of resistance. Nor should it be ima-

gined, that so much agitation was excited only by men of obscure condition, or a few party leaders; on the contrary, men of all ranks engaged in the work; and among the foremost, numbers remarkable for their opulence, their authority or their talents. The landholders, especially, were exasperated more than all others, and manifested a more vehement desire to triumph over the ministers; whom they called wicked, and whom they detested so mortally.

Meanwhile, on the first of June, at mid-day, all business ceased in the custom house of Boston, and the port was shut against every vessel that offered to enter; and, on the 14th, permission to depart was refused to all that had entered before. This day was observed as a day of calamity at Williamsburg, the capital of Virginia; and as a day of general mourning in all the other cities of the continent. At Philadelphia, all business ceased, and all tradesmen, excepting the Quakers, closed their shops; the bells sounded the funeral knell. But the Bostonians excited pity; their city, lately so rich, so prosperous, so distinguished for the number and courteous character of its inhabitants, now presented, in every part, only the images of desolation and despair. The rich, in having lost the rents of their buildings, were becoming poor; the poor, deprived of employment, had fallen into indigence. Each sustained his share of the general calamity. A malignant soldiery, parading through the city, seemed also inclined to insult their miseries.

The inhabitants of the province of Massachusetts, and of all the others, came, indeed, to their succour; subscriptions went round, in Philadelphia, to procure some relief for those Bostonians, who, by the effect of the new law, were deprived of subsistence. But how inadequate were these succours, to satisfy the exigencies of such distress! Many of these unfortunate sufferers were reduced to the last extreme of penury. If the miseries, however, they experienced, were extreme, so also were the resignation and the fortitude with which they supported them. It may well be supposed, they perused with singular attention the pages of ancient and modern story, which have recorded the sufferings of the apostles of liberty, either to publish them, as they did, in a style often of virulence, and more often of emphasis, in the public journals, or to repeat them in popular assemblies, and paragon with such illustrious examples, the tribulations of the Bostonians, whose constancy they magnified with boundless encomium. They were styled the living martyrs of liberty,—the generous defenders of the rights of man; they were pronounced the worthy descendants of their virtuous and heroic ancestors.

The government had persuaded itself, that, the port of Boston being shut up, the inhabitants of the neighboring towns would endeavor to avail themselves of it by drawing to their own ports the commerce hitherto transacted in that city. But things took a direction very wide of its expectations. The inhabitants of Marblehead,

a small seaport, at a few miles distance from Boston, and even those of Salem, offered the Bostonians their ports, wharves, and warehouses, free of all expense or remuneration.

During these occurrences, most of the civil magistrates had suspended the exercise of their functions; for those who had been appointed under the new laws, had either declined acceptance, or were prevented by the people from acting in their several offices. The council only which assisted the governor, was permitted to despatch some affairs, as, out of thirty-six new counsellors, who had been appointed, only two had declined; but the others, having been denounced to the public as enemies to the country, and the multitude collecting in fury about their houses, the greater part resigned. The courts of justice were suspended, because their members refused to take the oath prescribed by the laws, or to conform, in any shape, to its provisions. The attorneys who had issued writs of citation, were compelled to ask pardon in the public journals, and promise not to expedite others, until the laws should be revoked, and the charters reestablished. The people rushed in a throng to occupy the seat of justice, that no room might be left for the judges; when invited to withdraw, they answered, that they recognised no other tribunals, and no other magistrates, but such as were established according to ancient laws and usages.

The greater part of the inhabitants, persuaded that things must, finally, terminate in open war, diligently provided themselves with arms, and exercised daily, in handling them. They succeeded in this with extreme facility, being naturally active, accustomed to fatigue, and experienced huntsmen. They excelled particularly in the use of the rifle, which they levelled with unerring aim. In all places, nothing was heard but the din of arms, or the sound of fifes and of drums; nothing was seen but multitudes intent upon learning the military exercise and evolutions; young and old, fathers and sons, and even the gentle sex, all bent their steps towards these martial scenes; some to acquire instruction, others to animate and encourage. The casting of balls, and making of cartridges, were become ordinary occupations. All things offered the image of an approaching war.

The arrival of general Gage, at Boston, had been followed by that of two regiments of infantry, with several pieces of cannon. These troops had been quartered in the city; they were reenforced by several regiments, coming from Ireland, from New York, from Halifax, and from Quebec; all directed upon this point, to smother the kindling conflagration. The inhabitants beheld this with incredible jealousy, which was still increased by an order of the general, to place a guard upon the isthmus, which connects the peninsula, where Boston is situated, with the main land. The pretext assigned was, to prevent the desertion of the soldiers, but the real motive of this step was to intimidate the inhabitants, that they might not, so



freely as they had done heretofore, transport arms from the city into the country. Every day gave birth to new causes of contention between the soldiers and the citizens. Popular rumors were circulated rapidly, and heard with avidity; at every moment the people collected as if ripe for revolt.

The governor, attentive to this agitation, and fearing some unhappy accident, resolved to fortify the isthmus, and proceeded in the works with great activity. The inhabitants of Boston, as well as those of the country, were extremely exasperated by it; they exclaimed, that this was an act of hostility on the part of the general, and a manifest proof that it was resolved to make every thing bend to military authority. Many conjectures were in circulation among the people, and violent menaces were thrown out. General Gage, apprehensive of an explosion, detached two companies of soldiers to seize the powder that was deposited in the magazine at Charlestown, near Boston. He considered this the more prudent, as the time was now approaching for the annual review of the militia; when, if any hostile designs were in agitation, they might probably be put in execution.

The rage of the people had now reached its acme. They assembled from all quarters, and hastened, with arms, to Cambridge. The more prudent had great difficulty to prevent them from marching furiously to Boston to demand the restitution of the powder, or in case of refusal, to fall immediately upon the garrison.

But soon after, and probably by a secret device of the patriot chiefs, to let the British soldiers perceive, that, if they should venture to offer the shadow of violence, a signal to the inhabitants of the province would suffice to make them repent of it, a report was circulated among this exasperated multitude, that the fleet and garrison had commenced hostilities, that their artillery was firing upon the town, and that the Bostonians were hard pressed to defend themselves. The rumor was spread with incredible rapidity through the whole province; in a few hours, above thirty thousand men were under arms; they proceeded towards Boston with the utmost speed, and made no halt till they had full certainty that the alarm was premature.

This movement gave origin to many others; and it became an almost daily custom to attack the houses of such as either had accepted the new offices, or in any way had shown themselves favorable to English pretensions, or opposed to American privileges. No longer, therefore, able to find safety except within the city itself, the commissioners of the customs, and those under their authority, as well as all other public officers, who had removed to Salem for the exercise of their functions, went back to Boston. Thus, in the space of a few months, the regulations were annihilated, which the ministers had designed to introduce by means of the port bill.

The province of Massachusetts was not the only theatre of popular commotions ; all had a part in this general convulsion. The inhabitants, at many points, fearing the governor might get the start of them in respect to seizing the powder, as he had done at Charlestown, flew to possess themselves of what lay in the forts and powder magazines of the king. Thus it happened at Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, where the provincials stormed the fort, and carried off the powder and artillery. The inhabitants of Rhode Island did the same ; the people of Newport rose, and took possession of forty pieces of cannon, which defended the harbor.

The removal of the powder at Charlestown, and the fortifications carrying on at Boston, together with the popular agitations, occasioned a meeting of delegates from the different towns and boroughs of the county of Suffolk, of which Boston is the capital. They took very spirited resolutions ; purporting, that no obedience was due to the late acts of parliament, but, on the contrary, hatred and execration, since they were attempts to enslave America ; that the appointment of public officers by virtue of these acts, was contrary to constitutional statutes and principles ; that the country would indemnify the subordinate officers, who should refuse to execute the orders of their superiors, appointed under the new laws ; that the collectors of the public money should retain it in their hands, and make no payment, until the ancient laws of the colony should be reestablished, or until it should be ordered otherwise by the provincial congress ; that those who had accepted the new offices must resign them before the 20th of September ; and if not, they should be declared enemies to the country ; that officers of the militia should be chosen in every town, selecting for this purpose, individuals skilful in arms, and inflexibly attached to the rights of the people ; that, as it had been reported it was in contemplation to apprehend certain persons of the county, if this menace should be executed, the royal officers should be immediately seized, and detained as hostages ; that the people should be exhorted to maintain tranquillity, and merit, by their moderation, by their steady, uniform and persevering resistance, in a contest so important, in a cause so solemn, the approbation of the wise, and the admiration of the brave, of every country, and of every age.

Another assembly, but of the entire province of Massachusetts, was held at Salem. The governor not choosing to sanction it by his presence, they formed themselves into a provincial congress, and elected Hancock president. After having addressed their complaints to the governor, of the fortifications of the isthmus, they took extraordinary measures for the defence of the province. They prepared munitions of war, they filled magazines with provisions, they enrolled twelve thousand of the militia, whom they called *minute men* ; that is, soldiers that must hold themselves in readiness to march at a

minute's notice. The decrees and recommendations of the provincial congress were executed with the same exactness as if they had emanated from a legitimate authority.

Thus, the plans of the British ministers produced, in America, effects contrary to their intentions. Already, every appearance announced the approach of civil war.

In the midst of this agitation, and of apprehensions inspired by the future, the general congress assembled at Philadelphia ; it was composed of delegates from all the American colonies.

END OF BOOK THIRD.



## BOOK FOURTH.

1774. THE deputies of the different colonies arrived in Philadelphia on the 4th of September, except those of North Carolina, who delayed their appearance until the 14th of the same month. All were men of note, and distinguished by the public favor. Far from being persons destitute of the goods of fortune, they were all landed proprietors, and some possessed even great opulence. Several had been instructed by their constituents, to exert their utmost endeavors to secure the liberty of America, by the most suitable means, and to restore the ancient course of things with England; others, to vote for resolutions relative to the exercise of commerce, calculated to induce the English government to embrace milder counsels towards the colonies; others, finally, were invested with unlimited authority to do whatsoever, in the present circumstances, they should judge most conducive to the public good.

Having met on the 5th, they resolved that their deliberations should be kept secret, until the majority should direct them to be published; and that, in determining questions, each colony should have but one vote, whatever might be the number of its deputies. They elected for president, Peyton Randolph, of Virginia; and for secretary, Charles Thomson. They were in number fifty-five.\*

For a long time, no spectacle had been offered to the attention of mankind, of so powerful an interest as this of the present American congress. It was indeed a novel thing, and as it were miraculous, that a nation, hitherto almost unknown to the people of Europe, or only known by the commerce it occasionally exercised in their ports, should, all at once, step forth from this state of oblivion, and, rousing as from a long slumber, should seize the reins to govern itself; that the various parts of this nation, hitherto disjointed, and almost in opposition to each other, should now be united in one body, and moved by a single will; that their long and habitual obedience should be suddenly changed for the intrepid counsels of resistance, and of open defiance, to the formidable nation whence they derived their origin and laws.

There had been observed, at intervals, it is true, in the vast dominions of Spain in America, some popular agitations; but they were easily repressed by the government. In the colonies of Portugal, the public repose had never been interrupted. France, in like manner, had always found her American subjects inclined to a willing submission. It was reserved for the English colonies, to afford the first example of resistance, and of a struggle to separate themselves from

\* See Note I.

the parent state. Such, however, was the necessary consequence of the constitution of England, and of her colonies; of the opinions which prevailed in the latter; of the memory of ancient revolutions; and of the discontents which, from time to time, had manifested themselves in America, but which now, for the first time, menaced an inevitable, and not distant explosion; for the congress of Albany had presented nothing illegal in its character, since it had been convoked by the legitimate authorities. It had manifested no tendency towards a new order of things; though perhaps the secret counsels of those who composed it eventually aspired at independence; but, in effect, nothing was regulated by that assembly, except the interests of the English colonies with regard to the Indian nations of the vicinity. When the congress of New York was convened, the excitement of men's minds was not yet so extreme, the popular disorders had not taken so alarming a character, nor had the government then displayed so much rigor, nor prostrated so many colonial statutes. On the other hand, the members of this congress, though possessed of much, had not so entire an influence with the American people as those of the congress of Philadelphia; nor did they excite such public expectation of future events as the latter assembly. The colonists looked upon it as a convention of men who, in some mode or other, were to deliver their country from the perils that menaced it. The greater part believed that their ability, their prudence and their immense influence with the people, would enable them to obtain from the government the removal of the evils that oppressed them, and the re-establishment of the ancient order of things. Some others cherished the belief, that they would find means to conduct the American nation to that independence which was the first and most ardent of their aspirations, or rather the sole object of that intense passion which stung and tormented them, night and day. The confidence they had placed in the congress, was equal to the aversion they had conceived to the new laws. The generality of people, usually ignorant what obstacles must be encountered in great enterprises, deem their grievances already removed, when they have confided to a few the interests of all; the colonists, accordingly, attributing to their new delegates greater power than they in reality possessed, were generally elated with the most flattering hopes. They knew that a union of minds is the most efficacious instrument of success; and their concord was prodigious; all were ready to sacrifice their lives and their fortunes to the triumph of their cause. Not that there existed none of another mind, who would gladly have held a quite different course; but they were few, in this first impulse, and they were reduced to silence by the consent and enthusiasm of all the others. No other government, however consolidated by the lapse of ages or the force of arms, ever experienced so much promptness and punctuality of obedience as the American congress. The colonists were disposed

to receive its deliberations, not only as the useful and salutary laws of a good government, but as the revered precepts and oracles of men consecrated and generously devoted to the salvation of their country.

Such was the posture of affairs in America at the epoch of the convocation of congress. But in Europe, the novelty of circumstances had excited strong emotions in the minds of all ; in some, creating fear,—in others hope,—in all, astonishment. In England, the ministerial party declaimed with vehemence against the audacity of the Americans, who were called rebels ; and the most rigorous counsels were already proposed. They could not comprehend how a people like that of America, divided, as they had always been, by a sectarian spirit, into various schisms and parties, should now be capable of a concord so entire, as to present but one only sentiment, and but one same will ;—how, laying aside the mutual rancor resulting from the diversity of their opinions and interests, they should all, at the present moment, have concurred in a resolution to defend and maintain what they considered their rights, against England.

‘Is it conceivable, that a nation which subsists by its commerce, that has no naval armament, and whose principal cities are exposed to the vengeance of a maritime enemy, that is unprovided with regular and veteran troops, should have the hardihood to dispute the will of the British nation, powerful in arms, radiant with the glory of its recent achievements, inexhaustible in public and private resources, strong in a government cemented by the hand of time, formidable for the prodigious number of its ships, and abounding in experienced commanders, both of land and sea ?’

But it was answered on the other side ;

‘Wherefore this astonishment at the resolution of the Americans ? Even though it were true, that, as to the means of sustaining war, they were thus inferior to Great Britain, who is ignorant that men inflamed by the zeal of political opinions do not descend to nice calculations, or spend time in weighing the probabilities of the future ? And has not England herself many difficulties to surmount ? Is she not divided, even upon this question of America, by the spirit of party ? Opinions are so much at variance on this subject, that a great number, it is clear, would march against the colonists with extreme repugnance. A vast ocean separates from us the countries in which the war must be carried on ; this circumstance alone will, of necessity, cause an incalculable expense, an enormous waste of military stores, an affrightful sacrifice of men, the most fatal delays, and a frequent defect of correspondence between measures and exigencies. The finances of England are exhausted by the exorbitant debt contracted in times past, and especially during the late war ; the revenue falls far short of meeting the ordinary expenditure ; and so ponderous an increase of burthen as the disbursements of this new war must involve, would absolutely crush the resources of the state. Be-



sides, what country is better adapted than America for a long defence ? It is covered with trackless forests, fortified by lakes, rivers, and mountains ; it has few passable roads ; and abounds in strong defiles, and fords, which are only known to the inhabitants.'

Nor should it be omitted, that the recollection of past events must have acted with great force upon the minds of those who directed the counsels of England. They were abandoned to doubt and uncertainty ; for this was the same cause which in the preceding century had been contested in England, and which, after so many efforts, and so much blood, had produced a total revolution, and placed the British sceptre in the hands of a new line of princes. But even this reflection was calculated to excite, in the members of the government, a certain indignation, but too proper to pervert their reason, and alienate them from the counsels of moderation and prudence. Assuredly, since the epoch of this revolution, the British cabinet never had a more difficult enterprise to conduct ; it had never witnessed a crisis of such fatal augury, or that menaced, with a wound so deadly, the very heart of the state. Nor was it possible to dissemble, that the Americans would not be destitute of foreign succours ; for, although the European powers, who possessed colonies in America, could not, but with certain solicitude, contemplate these commotions in the British provinces, viewing them as a dangerous example for their own subjects, who, if success should attend the designs of the Americans, might, they apprehended, indulge pernicious thoughts, and contrary to their allegiance ; yet they were greatly reassured, by reflecting that their colonists were far from cherishing the same political opinions that prevailed among the inhabitants of the English colonies. And, on the other hand, their vehement desire to see the power of England reduced, prevented them from perceiving the danger, or caused them to despise it ; for this danger was remote and uncertain ; whereas the advantage of the humiliation of England, which was expected to result from the American war, was near at hand, and, if not certain, at least extremely probable.

But, among the various nations of Europe, all more or less favorable to the cause of the Americans, and equally detesting the tyranny of England, none signalised themselves more than the French. The desire of vengeance, the hope of retrieving its losses, the remembrance of ancient splendor, the anguish of recent wounds, all stimulated the French government to side with the Americans. It waited only for the maturity of events, and a propitious occasion, to declare itself. These dispositions of the ministry were not unknown to the nation ; and, as no people are more susceptible of impressions from those in power than the French, the cause of the Americans found among them the most ardent and the most ingenious advocates. Many other causes, no less evident, concurred to the same effect. The people of France, though accustomed to live under a very

absolute system of government, have uniformly testified a particular esteem for such men, and for such nations, as have valiantly defended their liberty against the usurpations of tyranny ; for, when they are not led astray, and as it were transported out of themselves, by their exorbitant imagination, their character is naturally benevolent and gentle ; they are always disposed to succour the oppressed, especially when they support their ill fortune with constancy, and contend, with courage, to surmount it ; in a word, when their enterprise presents an aspect of glory and of greatness. Such was, or appeared to be, the cause of the Americans ; and such were the general sentiments of the French towards them.

It should also be added, that, at this epoch, the writers who had treated political subjects, in all countries, and especially in France, had manifested themselves the advocates of a more liberal mode of government ; and thus the opinions which prevailed, at that time, were extremely propitious to civil liberty. These writings were in more eager request, and these opinions were still more rapidly disseminated, at the news of the commotions which agitated America ; than which nothing could more evidently prove what was the spirit of that epoch. In all social circles, as well as in numerous publications which daily appeared in France, the Americans were the object of boundless praises ; their cause was defended by the most specious arguments, and justified by a multitude of illustrious examples. And if, at the epoch when France, after the cession made by the republic of Genoa, had undertaken the conquest of Corsica, many were found, among the French, who professed themselves the apologists of those islanders, and ventured openly to condemn the determination of their own government to subdue them, it may well be thought, the partisans of the Americans were far more numerous, and demonstrated an enthusiasm still more ardent. It would be difficult to express what joy and what hopes were excited by the intelligence of the convocation of the American congress. The names of the deputies were extolled to the skies ; ‘ Let them hasten,’ it was said, every where, ‘ to shake off the yoke of English despotism, to sever these bonds of servitude ; let them establish civil liberty in their country ; and let them serve as a perpetual example, that princes cannot, without peril, violate the fundamental laws of their states, nor attack with impunity the privileges and immunities of their subjects.’ Thus the French excited continually by new motives and plausible arguments, the already exasperated minds of the Americans ; and irritated those wounds which had already the appearance of canceration, in order to render them absolutely incurable.

Thus the congress saw united in its favor, not only the opinions of the American people, but also those of all the European nations, and even of their governments ; as likewise of no small part of the inhabitants of Great Britain itself. So great was, at this epoch, either

the spirit of innovation, or the love of liberty, or the desire to shake off the restraints of all authority whatsoever ! Meanwhile, all minds were suspended with expectation, for the issue of so important a contest ; and all eyes were attentive to see what measures the American convention would first adopt to sustain it.

It was natural, that the first thoughts of congress should have turned towards the province of Massachusetts, and the city of Boston. The resolutions of the assembly of Suffolk, having been the most vigorous, and the most important, it was determined to confirm them. They accordingly resolved, that they deeply felt the suffering of their countrymen, of the province of Massachusetts, under the operation of the late unjust and cruel acts of the British parliament ; that they much approved the wisdom and fortitude which the people of Massachusetts had displayed, in opposing such wicked measures ; they exhorted them to perseverance, and recommended the complete execution of the resolutions taken by the assembly of Suffolk ; they expressed their confident hopes that the united efforts of North America, would so persuade the British nation of the imprudence, injustice, and danger of the policy of the present ministers, as quickly to introduce better men, and wiser measures ; and, finally, they recommended, that the contributions which had been commenced, in all the colonies, should continue to be collected, for the relief and support of the Bostonians. And as those who are inclined to war, generally affect the most earnest desire of peace, congress addressed a letter to general Gage, praying him to put a stop to the hostile preparations, which might provoke a pacific people to have recourse to arms, and thus prevent the endeavors of the congress, to restore a good understanding with the parent state, and involve the nation in all the horrors of a civil war. He was especially requested to discontinue the fortifications of Boston, to repress military license, and to restore a free communication between the city and country.

Although the congress was not, constitutionally, a legitimate assembly, general Gage, desirous of testifying his disposition to preserve peace, answered, that no troops had ever given less cause for complaint, than those that were then stationed in Boston, notwithstanding the insults and provocations daily given to both officers and soldiers ; that the communication between the city and country had been always free, and should remain so, unless the inhabitants should constrain him to take other measures. The congress also decreed that if it should be attempted to carry into execution, by force, the late acts of parliament, in such case, all America ought to support the inhabitants of Massachusetts in their opposition ; that in case it should be judged necessary to remove the citizens of Boston into the country, the injury they might thereby sustain, should be repaired at the public expense ; and that every person whomsoever, who should accept of any commission, or authority, emanating from the new laws, should be held in universal detestation and abhorrence.



The congress also deemed it useful and necessary to resort to the accustomed confederacies against English commerce ; the merchants of the colonies were therefore requested to suspend all importation of merchandise from Great Britain, until the congress should have published its intentions, touching the course to be pursued for the preservation of the liberties of America. The agreement was promptly and universally contracted, according to its desires ; and it was further stipulated, that all exportation of merchandise to Great Britain, Ireland and the West Indies, should cease after the 10th of September, 1775, unless the wrongs of which the Americans complained, were redressed prior to that period. The league was observed, this time, with an astonishing consent.

There still remained an affair of the last importance ; that of determining what were the pretensions of America, and the terms upon which she would consent to resume her ancient relations of amity with Great Britain. To this effect the congress published an elaborate declaration, entitled, a Declaration of Rights. This paper commenced with very bitter complaints, that the parliament had, of late years, undertaken to tax the colonies ; to establish an extraordinary board of customs ; to extend the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty ; to grant salaries to the judges, without the concurrence of the colonial assemblies ; to maintain a standing army in times of peace ; to ordain that persons charged with offences, affecting the state, should be transported to England for trial ; to annul the regulations of the government of Massachusetts, respecting the prosecution of those who should be questioned for acts committed in the execution of the laws, and in opposition to tumults ; and, finally, to abolish the English laws in Canada, and to grant in that province extraordinary favor to the Catholic religion. Which acts of the parliament were pronounced impolitic, unjust, cruel, contrary to the constitution, most dangerous and destructive of American rights. They continued with saying, that whereas the legal assemblies of America, which had peaceably convened to deliberate on grievances, and remonstrate against unjust and oppressive laws, had been frequently dissolved, and their petitions and supplications treated with contempt by the ministers of the king ; the Americans had, therefore, determined to convoke this congress, in order to vindicate and secure their rights and liberties.

Then followed the enumeration of these rights, such as life, liberty and property ; which, they affirmed, no power could dispose of without their consent. To these were added the rights peculiar to English subjects, as for example, to participate in the legislative council ; and as the inhabitants of the colonies were not, and from local and other circumstances, could not be represented in the British parliament, they were entitled, it was asserted, to enjoy this right of legislation in their respective assemblies, consenting cheerfully, however, to the

operation of such acts of parliament as were, *bona fide*, restrained to the regulation of commerce, excluding every idea of taxation, internal or external. They claimed, in like manner, the right of being tried by their peers of the vicinage, and that of peaceably assembling and addressing their petitions to the king. It was also declared, that the keeping a standing army in the colonies, in times of peace, without the consent of the respective colonial assemblies, was altogether contrary to law. The congress here recapitulated the acts of parliament which had violated the foregoing rights, affirming that the Americans could not submit to such grievous acts and measures, nor in any mode return to the former state of things, without their revocation.

It was hoped, that their fellowcitizens of Great Britain, would, on a revision of these laws, see the necessity of repealing them, and thus restore the Americans to that state of happiness and prosperity, which they had enjoyed in times past; that, in the meantime, and for the present, they were resolved to enter into a nonimportation, nonconsumption, and nonexportation agreement, in respect to all articles of commerce with Great Britain. They determined also, to prepare an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the inhabitants of British America, as also another to the king, in conformity to resolutions already taken.

By the first, their design was to conciliate the English people, and to appease the resentment which they apprehended would be excited by the effect of the American combinations against their commerce. This they executed with singular address; on the one hand, flattering the self love of the British, and on the other, averring that it was with repugnance, and compelled, as it were, by invincible necessity, they were induced to embrace these prejudicial associations. They were ready, they added, to dissolve them the moment the government should have restored them to their original condition.

We transcribe a part of this address of the American congress to the English people, as it is peculiarly proper to demonstrate what were the prevailing opinions at this epoch; with what ardor and inflexible resolution the Americans supported their cause; and the great progress they had made in the art of writing with that eloquence which acts so irresistibly upon the minds of men. The three members of congress who composed it, were, Lee, Livingston, and Jay; the last, it is generally believed, was the author. It was conceived in the following terms;

‘When a nation, led to greatness by the hand of liberty, and possessed of all the glory that heroism, munificence and humanity can bestow, descends to the ungrateful task of forging chains for her friends and children, and instead of giving support to freedom, turns advocate for slavery and oppression, there is reason to suspect she has either ceased to be virtuous, or been extremely negligent in the appointment of her rulers.

‘In almost every age, in repeated conflicts, in long and bloody wars, as well civil as foreign, against many and powerful nations, against the open assaults of enemies, and the more dangerous treachery of friends, have the inhabitants of your island, your great and glorious ancestors, maintained their independence, and transmitted the rights of men, and the blessings of liberty, to you their posterity. Be not surprised, therefore, that we, who are descended from the same common ancestors ; that we, whose forefathers participated in all the rights, the liberties, and the constitution, you so justly boast of, and who have carefully conveyed the same fair inheritance to us, guarantied by the plighted faith of government, and the most solemn compacts with British sovereigns, should refuse to surrender them to men, who found their claims on no principles of reason, and who prosecute them with a design, that by having *our* lives and property in their power, they may, with the greater facility, enslave *you*. The cause of America is now the object of universal attention ; it has, at length, become very serious. This unhappy country has not only been oppressed, but abused and misrepresented ; and the duty we owe to ourselves and posterity, to your interest, and the general welfare of the British empire, lead us to address you on this very important subject.

‘Know, then, that we consider ourselves, and do insist that we are, and ought to be, as free as our fellow subjects in Britain, and that no power on earth has a right to take our property from us without our consent. That we claim all the benefits secured to the subject by the English constitution, and particularly, that inestimable one of trial by jury. That we hold it essential to English liberty, that no man be condemned unheard, or punished for supposed offences, without having an opportunity of making his defence. That we think the legislature of Great Britain is not authorised by the constitution, to establish a religion, fraught with sanguinary and impious tenets, or to erect an arbitrary form of government, in any quarter of the globe.

‘These rights, we, as well as you, deem sacred. And yet, sacred as they are, they have, with many others, been repeatedly and flagrantly violated. Are not the proprietors of the soil of Great Britain lords of their own property ? can it be taken from them without their consent ? will they yield it to the arbitrary disposal of any man or number of men whatever ? You know they will not. Why then are the proprietors of the soil of America less lords of their property than you are of yours ; or why should they submit it to the disposal of your parliament, or any other parliament, or council in the world, not of their election ? Can the intervention of the sea that divides us cause disparity in rights ? or can any reason be given why English subjects, who live three thousand miles from the royal palace, should enjoy less liberty than those who are three hundred miles distant from it ? Reason looks with indignation on such distinctions, and



freemen can never perceive their propriety. And yet, however chimerical and unjust such discriminations are, the parliament assert, that they have a right to bind us in all cases without exception, whether we consent or not; that they may take and use our property, when, and in what manner they please; that we are pensioners on their bounty for all that we possess, and can hold it no longer than they vouchsafe to permit. Such declarations we consider as heresies in English politics, and which can no more operate to deprive us of our property, than the interdicts of the pope can divest kings of sceptres, which the laws of the land and the voice of the people have placed in their hands.

‘At the conclusion of the late war—a war rendered glorious by the ability and integrity of a minister, to whose efforts the British empire owes its safety and its fame; at the conclusion of this war, which was succeeded by an inglorious peace, formed under the auspices of a minister, of principles and of a family unfriendly to the protestant cause, and inimical to liberty. We say, at this period, and under the influence of that man, a plan for enslaving your fellow subjects in America was concerted, and has ever since been pertinaciously carrying into execution.

‘Prior to this era, you were content with drawing from us the wealth produced by our commerce. You restrained our trade in every way that could conduce to your emolument. You exercised unbounded sovereignty over the sea. You named the ports and nations to which, alone, our merchandise should be carried, and with whom, alone, we should trade; and though some of these restrictions were grievous, we, nevertheless, did not complain; we looked up to you as to our parent state, to which we were bound by the strongest ties; and were happy in being instrumental to your prosperity and your grandeur. We call upon you yourselves to witness our loyalty and attachment to the common interest of the whole empire; did we not, in the last war, add all the strength of this vast continent to the force which repelled our common enemy? Did we not leave our native shores, and meet disease and death, to promote the success of British arms in foreign climates? Did you not thank us for our zeal, and even reimburse us large sums of money, which, you confessed, we had advanced beyond our proportion, and far beyond our abilities? You did. To what causes, then, are we to attribute the sudden change of treatment, and that system of slavery which was prepared for us at the restoration of peace?’

After having gone through a recital of the present disturbances, and specified all the laws of which they complained, they continued thus;

‘This being a true state of facts, let us beseech you to consider to what end they lead. Admit that the ministry, by the powers of Britain, and the aid of our Roman Catholic neighbors, should be able to carry

the point of taxation, and reduce us to a state of perfect humiliation and slavery ; such an enterprise would doubtless make some addition to your national debt, which already presses down your liberties, and fills you with pensioners and placemen. We presume, also, that your commerce will somewhat be diminished. However, suppose you should prove victorious, in what condition will you then be ? what advantages, or what laurels, will you reap from such a conquest ? May not a ministry, with the same armies enslave you ? It may be said, you will cease to pay them ; but, remember, the taxes from America, the wealth, and we may add the men, and particularly the Roman Catholics, of this vast continent, will then be in the power of your enemies ; nor will you have any reason to expect, after making slaves of us, many among us should refuse to assist in reducing you to the same abject state.

‘ We believe there is yet much virtue, much justice, and much public spirit, in the English nation. To that justice we now appeal. You have been told, that we are seditious, impatient of government, and desirous of independency ; but these are mere calumnies. Permit us to be as free as yourselves, and we shall ever esteem a union with you to be our greatest glory, and our greatest happiness. But if you are determined that your ministers shall wantonly sport with the liberties of mankind ; if neither the voice of justice, the dictates of the law, the principles of the constitution, or the suggestions of humanity, can restrain your hands from shedding human blood in such an impious cause, we must then tell you, that we shall never submit to be hewers of wood or drawers of water for any minister or nation in the world.

‘ Place us in the same situation that we were at the close of the war, and our former harmony will be restored. But lest the same supineness, and the same inattention to our common interest, which you have for several years shown, should continue, we think it prudent to anticipate the consequences. By the destruction of the trade of Boston, the ministry have endeavored to induce submission to their measures. The like fate may befall us all. We will endeavor therefore, to live without trade, and recur for subsistence to the fertility and bounty of our native soil, which will afford us all the necessities, and some of the conveniencies, of life. We have suspended our importation from Great Britain and Ireland ; and, in less than a year’s time, unless our grievances should be redressed, shall discontinue our exports to those kingdoms and the West Indies. It is with the utmost regret, however, that we find ourselves compelled, by the overruling principles of self preservation, to adopt measures detrimental in their consequences to numbers of our fellow subjects in Great Britain and Ireland. But we hope that the magnanimity and justice of the British nation will furnish a parliament of such wisdom, independence and public spirit, as may save the violated rights of the whole empire

from the devices of wicked ministers and evil counsellors, whether in or out of office ; and thereby restore that harmony, friendship and fraternal affection, between all the inhabitants of his majesty's kingdoms and territories, so ardently wished for by every true and honest American.'

The scope of their address to the inhabitants of America, was to manifest the justice of their cause, by an exact enumeration of the offensive laws ; to confirm them in resistance ; and to prepare their minds for the worst. They observed, that the designs of the ministers to enslave America, had been conducted with such constancy, as to render it prudent to expect mournful events, and be prepared, in all respects, for every contingency.

In the petition addressed to the king, they made protestations of their attachment towards the crown and the royal family ; they affirmed, that nothing short of the usurpations which wicked counsellors, deceiving the paternal heart of his majesty, had attempted, could have induced them to depart from that submission of which they had given, in happier times, such signal examples ; that it was with extreme reluctance, and urged by imperious necessity, they had entered into resolutions detrimental to the commerce of their European fellow subjects ; and after having recapitulated all their grievances, they proceeded ;

'From this destructive system of colonial administration, adopted since the conclusion of the last war, have flowed those distresses, dangers, fears, and jealousies, that overwhelm your majesty's dutiful colonists with affliction ; and we defy our most subtle and inveterate enemies, to trace the unhappy differences between Great Britain and these colonies, from an earlier period, or from other causes than we have assigned. Had they proceeded, on our part, from a restless levity of temper, unjust impulses of ambition, or artful suggestions of seditious persons, we should merit the opprobrious terms frequently bestowed upon us by those we revere. But, so far from promoting innovations, we have only opposed them ; and can be charged with no offence, unless it be one to receive injuries and be sensible of them.

'Had our Creator been pleased to give us existence in a land of slavery, the sense of our condition might have been mitigated by ignorance and habit. But, thanks be to his adorable goodness, we were born the heirs of freedom, and ever enjoyed our rights under the auspices of your royal ancestors, whose family was seated on the British throne to rescue and secure a pious and gallant nation from the popery and despotism of a superstitious and inexorable tyrant.

'Your majesty, we are confident, justly rejoices that your title to the crown is thus founded on the title of your people to liberty ; and therefore we doubt not but your royal wisdom must approve the sensibility that teaches your subjects anxiously to guard the blessing they



received from Divine Providence, and thereby to prove the performance of that compact which elevated the illustrious House of Brunswick to the imperial dignity it now possesses. The apprehension of being degraded into a state of servitude, from the preeminent rank of freemen, while our minds retain the strongest love of liberty, and clearly foresee the miseries preparing for us and for our posterity, excites emotions in our breasts, which, though we cannot describe, we should not wish to conceal. Feeling as men, and thinking as subjects, in the manner we do, silence would be disloyalty. By giving this faithful information, we do all in our power to promote the great objects of your royal cares, the tranquillity of your government, and the welfare of your people; and, as your majesty enjoys the signal distinction of reigning over freemen, we apprehend the language of freemen cannot be displeasing. Your royal indignation, we hope, will rather fall on those dangerous and designing men, who, daringly interposing themselves between your royal person and your faithful subjects, and for several years past incessantly employed to dissolve the bonds of society, by abusing your majesty's authority, misrepresenting your American subjects, and prosecuting the most desperate and irritating projects of oppression, have at length compelled us, by the force of accumulated injuries, too severe to be any longer tolerable, to disturb your majesty's repose by our complaints.'

The congress having, by these different writings, endeavored to mollify the breast of the sovereign, to conciliate the favor of the English people, to dispose and prepare the colonists to brave all the terrors of the crisis, and, generally, to propitiate the favor of the European nations, turned their attention towards the inhabitants of Canada, whose benevolence it was desirable to cultivate, in order to secure, if not their adherence, at least their neutrality, in the grand struggle that was approaching; for, omitting the increase of force which must have resulted to one or other of the belligerent parties, from the alliance of the brave and warlike Canadians, it was of the greatest importance to the colonists, to be secure of the friendly disposition of a country, which, from its position alone, appeared to menace their provinces. This negotiation, however, required a very delicate management; for the Canadians were not accustomed to English liberty; and had been long contented with their condition under the government of France. The difference of religion was also an obstacle of great moment. How was it possible to persuade them to undertake the defence of rights they scarcely knew, or which they esteemed of little value? And how hopeless must have appeared the attempt to induce them to complain of the act of Quebec, which favored, protected, and placed in a condition even better than at first, a religion they held so much at heart! The congress, however, in their address to the Canadian people, eluded these embarrassments with singular dexterity.

They commenced with a declaration that the Canadians were entitled to possess all the rights enjoyed by English subjects ; they accused the ministers of a design to deprive them thereof, and to enslave them totally. They endeavored to explain, in the most insinuating style, what these rights were ; how extreme their importance, and how conducive they were to the happiness of every human being. They sufficed, it was affirmed, to defend the poor from the rich, the feeble from the powerful, the industrious from the rapacious, the peaceable from the violent, the tenants from the lords, and all from their superiors. ‘These are the rights without which a people cannot be free and happy, and to whose protection and encouraging influence, the English colonies are indebted for their present prosperity, and numerous population. Of these rights, the act of Quebec has completely divested the Canadians ! It has not left the people even a shadow of authority, but has placed it all in the hands of those who are themselves absolutely dependent on the crown. Can any government be imagined more arbitrary or tyrannical ? Whatever may have been the rigors of the French domination, your present condition is infinitely worse ; for then they were Frenchmen, who ruled other Frenchmen ; and that benignity which the mode of government appeared to exclude, resulted, nevertheless, from the community of language, manners, opinions, and the bonds of national fraternity. But since they are Englishmen who now govern a French people, the latter can no longer expect from the sympathy of their rulers, but only from the protection of laws, a refuge from the abuses of authority, and the rapacious passions of foreign ministers, always disposed to suspect them of pernicious designs. Seize, then, the occasion which is offered, by joining with us, to acquire that liberty and those privileges which the colonists have always enjoyed ; and which they are, with one mind, resolved never to resign, but with their lives.’

As to religion, in order to quiet their minds upon this subject, it was observed, that the tolerant opinions which prevailed, at the present epoch, among the French people, would doubtless remove all obstacles to a sincere amity between them. They cited the example of the Swiss, who, notwithstanding the difference of their religion, lived with one another in the utmost concord, and were thus enabled to defy and defeat every tyrant that had invaded them.

‘Let the inhabitants of Canada, therefore, take advantage of circumstances. Let them form a provincial convention ; let them elect their delegates to congress, and attach themselves to the common cause of North America. Has not the present congress already resolved unanimously, that they considered the violation of the rights of the Canadians, by the act for altering the government of their province, as a violation of the rights of the colonists themselves ?’

Letters of a similar style, and tending to the same object, were addressed to the colonies of St. John's, Nova Scotio, Georgia, and the Floridas.

At the same time, the congress passed a resolution, declaring, that the arrest of any person in America, in order to transport such person beyond the sea, for trial of offences committed in America, being against law, authorised resistance and reprisal.

Having concluded these transactions, and appointed the 10th of the ensuing May for the convocation of another general congress, the present dissolved itself.

No one will deny, that this assembly knew how to appreciate the circumstances of the time, and demonstrated a rare sagacity, in leading them to cooperate in their designs. They not only found means to invigorate the opinions which then prevailed in America, but also to diffuse and propagate them surprisingly; applauding the ardent, stimulating the torpid, and conciliating the adverse. They were lavish in protestations of loyalty to the king; which could not fail to answer the end they proposed—that of finding a pretext and excuse for ulterior resolutions, in case their remonstrances should prove ineffectual. With the same apt policy, they flattered the pride of the British nation, with the view of engaging it to favor their cause. They manifested equal dexterity in fomenting the political opinions that were beginning to prevail in this century. Originating at first in England, they had been diffused, by degrees, among the neighboring nations, and particularly in France, where they had been introduced, and defended with a fascinating eloquence, by the most celebrated writers of that period. Accordingly, in every place and circle, the Americans, and especially the members of congress, were considered as the generous champions of these favorite principles; for, as to the object they had in view, there no longer existed a doubt. Though it was possible, however, to excuse, and even applaud this resolution of the Americans, to defend, by force of arms, the rights for which they contended, it was difficult, it must be acknowledged, to reconcile with the loyalty they so frequently professed, their insinuating writings to draw into their confederacy other subjects of the crown of England, as the Canadians, for example, who had not, or who made no pretensions to have, the same rights. But in affairs of state, utility is often mistaken for justice; and, in truth, no event could have happened more useful to the colonists than the adhesion of the Canadians to their cause.

1775. The resolutions of congress were received in America with universal consent. They were approved not only by the people, but also by the authorities, whether established or provisional. The assembly of Pennsylvania, convened about the close of the year, was the first constitutional authority which ratified formally all the acts of congress, and elected deputies for the ensuing. A convention



having soon after been formed in this province, it was therein declared, that, if the petition of congress was rejected, and the government should persist in attempting to execute by force the late arbitrary acts of parliament, it would then be requisite to resist also with open force, and defend, at all hazards, the rights and liberties of America. Not content with words, this assembly recommended that provision should be made of salt, gunpowder, saltpetre, iron, steel, and other munitions of war. Charles Thomson and Thomas Mifflin, afterwards general, both men of great influence in the province, and much distinguished for their intellectual endowments, were very active on this occasion ; and, by their exertions, the resolutions of the convention were executed with singular promptitude and vigor.

The inhabitants of Maryland displayed an equal ardor ; all within their province was in movement. Meetings were convoked, in every place ; associations were formed ; men were chosen, for the purpose of seeing that the resolutions of congress were punctually observed and executed. The provincial convention voted funds for the purchase of arms and ammunition ; they declared enemies to the country those who should refuse to provide themselves with a military equipment. The most distinguished citizens made it their glory to appear armed in the cause of liberty ; the militia was daily assembled and exercised ; it was withdrawn from the authority of the governor, and placed under that of the province ; they held themselves in readiness to march to the assistance of Massachusetts.

The same precautions were taken in the lower counties of Delaware, and in New Hampshire. The legal assembly of the latter was convoked. They approved the proceedings of congress, and wrote to congratulate the Marylanders upon their patriotism and public spirit ; promising to stand prepared to defend this liberty, so dear to every heart. The inhabitants, not content with this, formed a convention at Exeter, which ratified the doings of congress, and elected delegates for the new session.

But in South Carolina, so important a province, things went forward with great animation. A convention was formed of the representatives of the whole province. Their first decree was to render immortal thanks to the members of congress, to approve its resolutions, and to ordain their strict execution. The manufacturers of the country received encouragement ; and ample liberalities were granted to the indigent inhabitants of the city of Boston. The same enthusiasm inspired every breast. And, to prevent the infractions which the love of gain, or private interest, might occasion, inspectors were appointed, to watch, with rigorous diligence, over the execution of these public resolutions.

In Massachusetts and Virginia the ardor of the people was astonishing. All places equally presented the images of war, and the

semblance of combats. The inhabitants of Marblehead, of Salem, and of other seaports, finding their accustomed maritime occupations interrupted by the present occurrences, turned their efforts towards the land service, and engaged in it with incredible zeal. They soon organised several regiments of men well trained to the exercise of arms, and prepared to enter the field, if things should come to that fatal extremity. The officers of the Virginia militia being assembled at fort Gower, after protesting their loyalty towards the king, declared, that the love of liberty, attachment to country, and devotion to its just rights, were paramount to every other consideration; that, to fulfil these sacred duties, they were resolved to exert all the efforts which the unanimous voice of their fellowcitizens should exact.

The provinces of New England presented a peculiar character. Their inhabitants being extremely attached to religion, and more easily influenced by this than any other motive, the preachers exercised over their minds an authority scarcely conceivable. They often insisted, and always with new vehemence, that the cause of the Americans was the cause of heaven; that God loves and protects freemen, and holds the authors of tyranny in abhorrence; that the schemes of the English ministers against America were, beyond measure, unjust and tyrannical, and consequently it was their most rigorous duty, not only as men and citizens, but also as Christians, to oppose these attempts; and to unite under their chiefs, in defence of what man has the most precious, religion the most sacred. The inhabitants of New England thus took the field, stimulated by the fervor of their religious opinions, and fully persuaded that heaven witnessed their efforts with complacency. The two most powerful springs of human action, religious and political enthusiasm, were blended in their breasts. It is therefore not surprising that, in the events which followed, they exhibited frequent examples of singular courage and invincible resolution.

Amidst a concord so general, the province of New York alone hesitated to declare itself. This colony, and principally the capital, was the scene of much party division. Its assembly having taken into consideration the regulations of congress for the interruption of commerce with Great Britain, refused to adopt them; whereat the inhabitants of the other provinces testified an extreme indignation. This unexpected resolution must be attributed principally to ministerial intrigues, very successful in this province, on account of the great number of loyalists that inhabited it; and who, from the name of one of the parties that prevailed in England at the time of the revolution, were called *Tories*. To this cause should be added the very flourishing commerce of the city of New York, which it was unwilling to lose, and perhaps, also, the hope that the remonstrances of congress would dispose the British ministers to milder counsels, if they were not accompanied by such rigorous determinations in regard

to commerce. Some also believed, that this conduct of New York was only a wily subterfuge, to be able, afterwards, according to circumstances, to use it as a ground of justification.

The first of February was the destined term for suspending the introduction of British merchandise into the American ports, according to the resolutions of congress. Though it was known every where, yet several vessels made their appearance, even after this period, laden with the prohibited articles ; which the masters hoped to introduce either in a clandestine mode or even by consent of the Americans, weary of their obstinacy, or yielding to necessity and the love of gain. But their hopes were frustrated in the greater part, or rather in all the provinces except that of New York. Their cargoes were thrown into the sea, or sent back.

Thus, while the forms of the ancient government still subsisted in America, new laws were established, which obtained more respect and obedience on the part of the people. The assemblies of the provinces, districts and towns, had concentrated in their hands the authority which belonged to the magistrates of the former system, who had either wanted the will or the power to prevent it. And thus it was no longer the governors and the ordinary assemblies, but the conventions, the committees of correspondence and of inspection, that had the management of state affairs. Where these were wanting, the people supplied the deficiency, by assemblages and tumultuary movements. The greater number were impressed with a belief, that, by the effect of the leagues against British commerce, this time strictly observed, and by the unanimous firmness of the colonists, the effusion of blood would be avoided. They hoped the British government would apply itself in earnest to give another direction to American affairs ; and that public tranquillity would thus, without effort, be reestablished. The popular leaders, on the contrary, were aware of the necessity of an appeal to arms ; some feared, others desired, this result.

Such was the situation of the English colonies, towards the close of the year 1774, and at the commencement of 1775. Meanwhile, whatever was the ardor with which the Americans pursued their designs, the interest excited by this controversy in England had materially abated. The inhabitants of that kingdom, as if wearied by the long and frequent discussions which had taken place on either side, betrayed an extreme repugnance to hear any thing further on the subject. They had therefore abandoned themselves to an indifference approaching to apathy. As this contest was already of ten years' date, and though often on the point of issuing in an open rupture, had, however, never yet come to this fatal extremity, the prevailing opinion was, that, sooner or later, a definitive arrangement would be effected. It was even thought, that this object might easily be accomplished, by making some concessions to the Americans,



similar to those they had already obtained. Finally, it was considered possible, that the Americans themselves, finding their interests essentially affected by the interruption of commerce, would at length submit to the will of the parent country. This opinion appeared the more probable to all, inasmuch as the courage of the colonists was in no great repute. It was not believed they could ever think of provoking the British nation to arms; and much less of making a stand before its troops in the field. It was asserted, that, to procure the execution of the late prohibitory laws against the province of Massachusetts, which, if thought expedient, might easily be extended to the other colonies also, would not only not require all the troops of Great Britain, but not even all the immense force of her marine; that a few ships of the line, stationed at the entrance of the principal ports of the colonies, and a certain number of frigates ordered to cruise along the coast, to prevent the departure of American vessels, would be more than sufficient to accomplish this affair;

‘And how can it be imagined,’ it was said, ‘that the colonists should persevere in a resistance without an object, as they have no naval force to oppose against England; who, on the other hand, can, at a trifling expense, and with a few troops, enforce the prohibitions she has pronounced, and reduce the American commerce to an indefinite stagnation? On the part of the mother country, the means of annoyance are, in fact, almost infinite and irresistible; whereas, the colonies have nothing to oppose but a mere passive resistance, and a patience of which they can neither foresee the result nor the period. Besides, so many other markets remain open for British merchandise, that, even though its introduction into the colonies should be totally interdicted, this commerce would experience but a barely perceptible diminution. Nor can it be doubted, that private interests, and the usual jealousies, will ere long detach from the league, successively, all the maritime parts of America. The towns of the interior will necessarily follow the example; and then what becomes of this boasted confederacy?’

From these different considerations, it ceases to be astonishing, that the minds of the English people should have manifested, at this epoch, so perfect a calm; and that it should have been the general determination to await from time, from fortune, and from the measures of the ministers, the termination of this vexatious quarrel.

In the midst of such universal torpor, and near the close of the year 1774, the new parliament convened. The proceedings of the general congress, and the favor they had found in America, not being yet well known, some reliance was still placed in intestine divisions, and the efficacy of the plan which had been adopted. The king mentioned in his speech the American disturbances; he announced, that disobedience continued to prevail in Massachusetts; that the other colonies countenanced it; that the most proper measures had

been taken to carry into execution the laws of parliament ; and that he was firmly resolved to maintain unimpaired the supreme legislative authority of Great Britain, in all parts of his dominions. The addresses proposed in the two houses were strenuously opposed ; and it was not without difficulty they were at length adopted. On the part of the opposition it was alleged, that, if the preceding parliament had consented to the measures proposed by the ministers, it was only upon their positive assurance that they would effectually reestablish tranquillity. ‘ But, do we not see how illusory their promises have proved ? Why persist, then, in resolutions that are fruitless, and even pernicious ? Has any suppliant voice been heard on the part of America ? Has she given any token of repentance for the past, any pledge of better dispositions for the future ? She has not ; but, on the contrary, has exhibited still greater animosity, a rage more intense, a concord more strict, a faith more confirmed in the justice of her cause. And still, from pride, if not from vengeance, it is desired to persevere in measures so decidedly reprobated by reason, equity, and fatal experience !’

But, from the side of the ministers, it was answered ;

‘ The proceedings of the colonists are so void of all respect, that to endure them longer would be disgraceful. Can any thing be more extraordinary, than to hear it asserted that the Americans are persuaded of the justice of their cause,—as if the English were not persuaded also of the justice of theirs ? And if England, as a party, has no right to judge of this controversy, is America to be reputed entirely disinterested ? The Americans know perfectly well that this is a question of right, and not of money ; the impost is a mere trifle, of no importance whatever, but as it concerns the honor of this kingdom. But what care they for the honor of the kingdom ? Nothing can ever satisfy these peevish Americans. To content them how many ways of gentleness have been tried ! They have only become the more insolent. They haughtily expect the English to approach them in a suppliant attitude, and to anticipate all their capricious desires. To conciliate them, all, except honor, has been sacrificed already ; but heaven does not permit us to abandon that also. The question is no longer taxation, but the redress of wrongs, the reparation for deeds of outrage. This the Americans refuse,—and therefore deserve chastisement ; and, should England fail to inflict it, she must expect a daily increase of audacity on the part of her colonies, and prepare to digest the contempt which the nations of Europe already entertain towards her ; surprised and confused at the tameness and patience of the British ministers, in the midst of provocations so daring and so often repeated.’

The address of thanks was voted, according to the wishes of the ministers ; and thus the Americans, who had flattered themselves that the new parliament would be more favorably disposed towards them than the preceding, were forced to renounce this hope.

It appeared, however, notwithstanding these animated demonstrations on the part of the government, that when, previous to the Christmas recess, the certain intelligence was received of the transactions of congress, and the astonishing concord which prevailed in America, the ministers, perhaps loath to embrace extreme counsels, seemed inclined to relax somewhat of their rigor, and to leave an opening for accommodation. Lord North even intimated to the American merchants then in London, that if they presented petitions, they should meet attention. But in the midst of these glimmerings of peace, the news arrived of the schism of New York ; an event of great moment in itself, and promising consequences still more important. The minister felt his pride revive ; he would no longer hear of petitions, or of accommodation. Things turned anew to civil strife and war. All the papers, relating to the affairs of America, were laid before the two houses. Lord Chatham, perceiving the obstinacy of the ministers in their resolution to persist in the course of measures they had adopted, and fearing it might result in the most disastrous effects, pronounced a long and extremely eloquent discourse in favor of the Americans, and was heard with solemn attention.

Nor was the opposition to the projects of the ministers confined to the two houses of parliament ; but even a considerable part of the British nation was of the adverse party. The cities of London, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Norwich, Birmingham, Glasgow, and others, where commerce had hitherto flourished, preferred their petitions to parliament. They painted, in glowing traits, the detriment their commerce had already sustained, and the still more ruinous losses with which they were menaced by the impending contest with America. They implored this body to interpose their authority for the reestablishment of that calm and pacific state, which had been heretofore enjoyed. But the prayers of the merchants had no better success than the authority and the words of the earl of Chatham ; the ministerial party even rejected them with an unfeeling harshness.

In the meantime, Bolla, Franklin, and Lee, presented themselves before the house of commons, with the petition which the congress had addressed to the king, and by him had been referred to the house. They demanded to be heard in its defence. A very warm discussion arose ; the ministerial party contending, that neither ought the petition to be read, nor the agents to be heard ; and the party in opposition, the contrary. The former affirmed, that the congress was not a legal assembly ; that to receive its petitions would be to recognise it as such ; that the provincial assemblies and their agents were the sole true representatives of the colonies ; and that the petition only contained the customary lamentations about rights, without offering any means, or any probable hope of coming to an arrangement



But it was answered, that however the congress might not be a legal assembly, it was, nevertheless, more than competent to present petitions; every one having, either individually, or jointly with others, the right to present them; that those who had signed the petition were the most distinguished inhabitants of the colonies, and well deserved to be heard, if not in their public, at least in their private character. 'There no longer exists any government in the colonies; the popular commotions have disorganised it absolutely; we should therefore learn to appreciate the representation of this government, which has been established by the force of things. Can it be forgotten, that the American disturbances have originated, and arrived at their present alarming height, from our unwillingness to hear petitions? Let us seize this occasion; if we allow it to escape, a second will not be offered, and all hope of accord is vanished. This is probably the last attempt the Americans will make to submit, which, if received with haughtiness, will become the source of inevitable calamities; for despair, and with it, obstinacy, will obtain the entire possession of their minds.' But the ministers would hear nothing, pleading the dignity of state. The petition was rejected. Nor was a petition of the West India proprietors, representing the prejudice they suffered from the interruption of their commerce with the Americans, received with greater benignity. The ministers considered petitions as merely the stratagems of faction. 'Admitting,' they said, 'that some detriment may result from the measures relating to America, it is a necessary evil, an inevitable calamity. But this evil would become infinitely greater, if the government should appear to yield to the will of the seditious, and descend to negotiate with rebels.'

After having repulsed, with a sort of disdain, the petitions of the Americans, and those presented in their favor by the islands of the West Indies, and even by England herself; and after having rejected all the counsels of the party in opposition, the ministers unveiled their schemes, and announced, in the presence of the two houses, the measures they intended to pursue, in order to reduce the Americans to obedience. Always imbued with the opinion, that the diversity of interests and humors, and the rivalships existing between the different provinces, would in a short time dissolve the American combinations, independently of the detriment and constraint they occasioned to individuals; believing, also, that the colonists would not easily support greater privations of things necessary to life; they flattered themselves, that, without sending strong armies to America, and merely by a few rigorous regulations, a few prohibitory resolutions, that should extend beyond the province of Massachusetts, and affect the most internal parts of the American commerce, they should be able to accomplish their purpose. It should also be added, that the ministers thought the partisans of England were very numerous

in America, that they were among its most distinguished inhabitants, and waited only for an occasion to show themselves with effect; and, finally, that the Americans, as they were, according to the notions of the ministers, of a pusillanimous spirit, and little accustomed to war, would not dare to look the British soldiers in the face. Thus they were induced to adopt certain resolutions, which were perhaps more cruel, and certainly more irritating, than open war; for man feels less bitterness towards the foe, who, in combating against him, leaves him the means of defence, than the adversary who exposes him to the horrors of famine, while he is unable to escape them by a generous effort. Such, as we shall soon see, was the plan of the British, from which they gathered the fruits they ought to have expected. But, in order to carry it into execution, it was necessary that they should first arm themselves with a word that should legitimate all their measures, and this was, rebellion. The doctors, whom they had invited to their consultations, after having considered the affair under all its faces, came to a conclusion, which, however admissible in other kingdoms, might still have appeared extremely doubtful in England. They pronounced, that the province of Massachusetts was found in a state of rebellion. Accordingly, the 2d of February, lord North, after having expatiated on the benignity with which the king and parliament had proceeded in maintaining the laws of the kingdom, and the necessity incumbent on the ministers, of protecting loyal and affectionate subjects against the rage of the seditious, proposed, that in the address to the king, it should be declared, that rebellion existed in the province of Massachusetts, and that it was supported and fomented by illegal combinations and criminal compacts with the other colonies, to the great prejudice of many innocent subjects of his majesty.

To declare the inhabitants of Massachusetts rebels, was to refer the decision of their cause to the chance of arms—was to denounce war against them. Accordingly, the opponents of ministers exhibited great ardor in combating this proposition; and even in their own party, a great number of individuals appeared to feel great repugnance, and a species of horror, at so grave a determination, and so fraught with future calamities. The orators of the opposition contended, that all the disorders in Massachusetts, however multiplied and aggravated, ought to be attributed, originally, to the attempts of those who were aiming to establish despotism, and whose measures evidently tended to reduce the Americans to that abject condition of slavery, which they hoped to introduce afterwards into the very heart of England. ‘To resist oppression,’ it was said ‘is the subject’s right, and the English kingdoms have presented frequent examples of its exercise. No act of violence has been committed in the province of Massachusetts, that has not been equalled, or surpassed, in each of the others; from what fatal partiality, then, is this province

alone to be made responsible for all? To press with rigor upon a single province, in the hope of separating it from the others, is a false measure; all are united in the same cause; all defend the same rights. To declare rebellion, is an act full of danger, and of no utility; it only tends to aggravate the evil, to increase the obstinacy of dispositions, to prepare a resistance more desperate and sanguinary, as no other hope will be left them but in victory.\*

But the partisans of the ministers, and particularly the doctors,\* who backed them, maintained, that acts of rebellion constituted rebellion itself; that to resist the laws of the kingdom being reputed rebellion in England, ought also to be so reputed in America; 'As for the rest,' they said, 'due clemency and liberality towards those who shall submit, will be mingled with the rigor to be exercised against the obstinate. Reasons of state, no less than justice, demand the chastisement of these insurgents; which being visited upon a few, will reclaim all to their duty; and thus the union of the colonies will be dissolved. Can we, in fact, make a serious matter of the resistance of the Americans? Cowards by nature, incapable of any sort of military discipline, their bodies are feeble, and their inclinations are dastardly. They would not be capable of sustaining a single campaign, without disbanding, or becoming so wasted by sickness, that a slight force would be more than sufficient for their complete reduction.' General Grant was so infatuated with this opinion, that he declared openly, he would undertake, with five regiments of infantry, to traverse the whole country, and drive the inhabitants from one end of the continent to the other. The minis-

\* It may amuse, if not surprise, the reader, to look at the outline, traced by another historian, of the characters whose sagacity the author seems to question more often than once;

'I took my seat in parliament,' says Mr. Gibbon, 'at the beginning of the memorable contest between Great Britain and America; and supported, with many a sincere and silent vote, the rights, though not perhaps the interests, of the mother country. After a fleeting, illusive hope, prudence condemned me to acquiesce in the humble station of a mute. I was not armed by nature and education with the intrepid energy of mind and voice,

'Vincentem strepitus, et natum rebus agendis.'

Timidity was fortified by pride; and even the success of my pen discouraged the trial of my voice. But I assisted at the debates of a *free assembly*; I listened to the attack and defence of eloquence and reason; I had a near prospect of the characters, views, and passions, of the *first men of the age*. The cause of government was *ably vindicated by lord North*, a statesman of spotless integrity, a consummate master of debate, who could wield, with equal dexterity, the arms of reason and of ridicule. He was seated on the treasury bench, *between his attorney and solicitor-general, the two pillars of the law and state*, 'magis pares quam similes;' and the minister might *indulge in a short slumber, whilst he was upholden, on either hand*, by the majestic sense of *Thurlow*, and the skilful eloquence of *Wedderburne*. From the adverse side of the house, an ardent and powerful opposition was supported, by the lively declamation of *Barre*; the legal acuteness of *Dunning*; the profuse and philosophic fancy of *Burke*; and the argumentative vehemence of *Fox*, who, in conduct of a party, approved himself equal to the conduct of an empire. By such men, every operation of peace and war, *every principle of justice or policy*, every question of authority and freedom, was *attacked and defended*; and the subject of the momentous contest was the union or separation of Great Britain and America.' [*Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works.*]



ters, whose comprehension seems to have had certain limits, suffered themselves, without reluctance, to be guided by such opinions as these ; and this was one of the principal causes of their precipitancy to commence the war with such feeble preparations.

The propositions of lord North were adopted, by a majority of more than two thirds of the suffrages.

But the party in opposition, aware of the importance of pronouncing so formal a declaration of rebellion, did not suffer themselves to be discouraged ; and, on the 6th of the same month, lord John Cavendish moved, in the house of commons, to reconsider the vote. It was then that Wilkes, one of the most ardent defenders of liberty of that epoch, and the declared partisan of republican principles, arose, and spoke in the following terms ;

‘I am indeed surprised, that in a business of so much moment as this before the house, respecting the British colonies in America, a cause which comprehends almost every question relative to the common rights of mankind, almost every question of policy and legislation, it should be resolved to proceed with so little circumspection, or rather with so much precipitation and heedless imprudence. With what temerity are we assured, that the same men who have been so often overwhelmed with praises for their attachment to this country, for their forwardness to grant it the necessary succours, for the valor they have signalled in its defence, have all at once so degenerated from their ancient manners, as to merit the appellation of seditious, ungrateful, impious rebels ! But if such a change has indeed been wrought in the minds of this most loyal people, it must at least be admitted, that affections so extraordinary could only have been produced by some very powerful cause. But who is ignorant, who needs to be told of the new madness that insatuates our ministers ?—who has not seen the tyrannical counsels they have pursued for the last ten years ? They would now have us carry to the foot of the throne, a resolution stamped with rashness and injustice, fraught with blood, and a horrible futurity. But before this be allowed them, before the signal of civil war be given, before they are permitted to force Englishmen to sheath their swords in the bowels of their fellow subjects, I hope this house will consider the rights of humanity, the original ground and cause of the present dispute. Have we justice on our side ? No ; assuredly, no. He must be altogether a stranger to the British constitution, who does not know that contributions are voluntary gifts of the people ; and singularly blind, not to perceive that the words ‘liberty and property,’ so grateful to English ears, are nothing better than mockery and insult to the Americans, if their property can be taken without their consent. And what motive can there exist for this new rigor, for these extraordinary measures ? Have not the Americans always demonstrated the utmost zeal and liberality, whenever their succours have been required by the mother country ?

‘In the two last wars, they gave you more than you asked for, and more than their faculties warranted; they were not only liberal towards you, but prodigal of their substance. They fought gallantly and victoriously by your side, with equal valor, against our and their enemy, the common enemy of the liberties of Europe and America, the ambitious and faithless French, whom now we fear and flatter. And even now, at a moment when you are planning their destruction, when you are branding them with the odious appellation of rebels, what is their language, what their protestations? Read, in the name of heaven, the late petition of the congress to the king; and you will find, ‘they are ready and willing, as they ever have been, to demonstrate their loyalty, by exerting their most strenuous efforts in granting supplies and raising forces, when constitutionally required.’ And yet we hear it vociferated, by some inconsiderate individuals, that the Americans wish to abolish the navigation act; that they intend to throw off the supremacy of Great Britain. But would to God, these assertions were not rather a provocation than the truth! They ask nothing, for such are the words of their petition, but for peace, liberty and safety. They wish not a diminution of the royal prerogative; they solicit not any new right. They are ready, on the contrary, to defend this prerogative, to maintain the royal authority, and to draw closer the bonds of their connexion with Great Britain. But our ministers, perhaps to punish others for their own faults, are sedulously endeavoring not only to relax these powerful ties, but to dissolve and sever them forever. Their address represents the province of Massachusetts as in a state of actual rebellion. The other provinces are held out to our indignation, as aiding and abetting. Many arguments have been employed, by some learned gentlemen among us, to comprehend them all in the same offence, and to involve them in the same proscription.

‘Whether their present state is that of rebellion, or of a fit and just resistance to the unlawful acts of power, to our attempts to rob them of their property and liberties, as they imagine, I shall not declare. But I well know what will follow, nor, however strange and harsh it may appear to some, shall I hesitate to announce it, that I may not be accused hereafter of having failed in duty to my country, on so grave an occasion, and at the approach of such direful calamities. Know, then, a successful resistance is a revolution, not a rebellion. Rebellion, indeed, appears on the back of a flying enemy, but revolution flames on the breastplate of the victorious warrior. Who can tell, whether in consequence of this day’s violent and mad address to his majesty, the scabbard may not be thrown away by them as well as by us; and whether, in a few years, the independent Americans may not celebrate the glorious era of the revolution of 1775, as we do that of 1668? The generous efforts of our forefathers for freedom, heaven crowned with success, or their noble blood had dyed

our scaffolds, like that of Scottish traitors and rebels; and the period of our history which does us the most honor, would have been deemed a rebellion against the lawful authority of the prince, not a resistance authorised by all the laws of God and man, not the expulsion of a detested tyrant.

‘But suppose the Americans to combat against us with more unhappy auspices than we combatted James, would not victory itself prove pernicious and deplorable? Would it not be fatal to British as well as American liberty? Those armies which should subjugate the colonists, would subjugate also their parent state. Marius, Sylla, Cæsar, Augustus, Tiberius, did they not oppress Roman liberty with the same troops that were levied to maintain Roman supremacy over subject provinces? But the impulse once given, its effects extended much further than its authors expected; for the same soldiery that destroyed the Roman republic, subverted and utterly demolished the imperial power itself. In less than fifty years after the death of Augustus, the armies destined to hold the provinces in subjection, proclaimed three emperors at once; disposed of the empire according to their caprice, and raised to the throne of the Cæsars the object of their momentary favor.

‘I can no more comprehend the policy, than acknowledge the justice of your deliberations. Where is your force, what are your armies, how are they to be recruited, and how supported? The single province of Massachusetts has, at this moment, thirty thousand men, well trained and disciplined, and can bring, in case of emergency, ninety thousand into the field; and doubt not, they will do it, when all that is dear is at stake, when forced to defend their liberty and property against their cruel oppressors. The right honorable gentleman with the blue riband assures us that ten thousand of our troops and four Irish regiments, will make their brains turn in the head a little, and strike them aghast with terror! But where does the author of this exquisite scheme propose to send his army? Boston, perhaps, you may lay in ashes, or it may be made a strong garrison; but the province will be lost to you. You will hold Boston as you hold Gibraltar, in the midst of a country which will not be yours; the whole American continent will remain in the power of your enemies. The ancient story of the philosopher Calanus and the Indian hide, will be verified; where you tread, it will be kept down; but it will rise the more in all other parts. Where your fleets and armies are stationed, the possession will be secured, while they continue; but all the rest will be lost. In the great scale of empire, you will decline, I fear, from the decision of this day; and the Americans will rise to independence, to power, to all the greatness of the most renowned states; for they build on the solid basis of general public liberty.



‘I dread the effects of the present resolution ; I shudder at our injustice and cruelty ; I tremble for the consequences of our imprudence. You will urge the Americans to desperation. They will certainly defend their property and liberties, with the spirit of freemen, with the spirit our ancestors did, and I hope we should exert on a like occasion. They will sooner declare themselves independent, and risk every consequence of such a contest, than submit to the galling yoke which administration is preparing for them. Recollect Philip II. king of Spain ; remember the Seven Provinces, and the duke of Alva. It was deliberated, in the council of the monarch, what measures should be adopted respecting the Low Countries ; some were disposed for clemency, others advised rigor ; the second prevailed. The duke of Alva was victorious, it is true, wherever he appeared ; but his cruelties sowed the teeth of the serpent. The beggars of the Briel, as they were called by the Spaniards, who despised them as you now despise the Americans, were those, however, who first shook the power of Spain to the centre. And, comparing the probabilities of success in the contest of that day, with the chances in that of the present, are they so favorable to England as they were then to Spain ? This none will pretend. You all know, however, the issue of that sanguinary conflict—how that powerful empire was rent asunder, and severed forever into many parts. Profit, then, by the experience of the past, if you would avoid a similar fate. But you would declare the Americans rebels ; and to your injustice and oppression, you add the most opprobrious language, and the most insulting scoffs. If you persist in your resolution, all hope of a reconciliation is extinct. The Americans will triumph—the whole continent of North America will be dismembered from Great Britain, and the wide arch of the raised empire fall. But I hope the just vengeance of the people will overtake the authors of these pernicious counsels, and the loss of the first province of the empire be speedily followed by the loss of the heads of those ministers who first invented them.’

Thus spoke this ardent patriot. His discourse was a prophecy ; and hence, perhaps, a new probability might be argued for the vulgar maxim, that the crazed read the future often better than the sage ; for, among other things, it was said also of Wilkes, at that time, that his intellects were somewhat disordered.

Captain Hervey answered him, in substance, as follows ;

‘I am very far from believing myself capable of arguing the present question with all the eloquence which my vehement adversary has signalised in favor of those who openly, and in arms, resist the ancient power of Great Britain ; as the studies which teach man the art of discoursing with elegance, are too different and too remote from my profession. This shall not, however, deter me from declaring my sentiments with freedom, on so important a crisis ; though

my words should be misinterpreted by the malignity of party, and myself represented as the author of illegal counsels, or, in the language of faction, the defender of tyranny.

‘And, first of all, I cannot but deplore the misery of the times, and the destiny which seems to persecute our beloved country. Can I see her, without anguish, reduced to this disastrous extremity, not only by the refractory spirit of her ungrateful children on the other side of the ocean, but also by some of those who inhabit this kingdom, and whom honor, if not justice and gratitude, should engage, in words and deeds, to support and defend her? Till we give a check to these incendiaries, who, with a constancy and art only equalled by their baseness and infamy, blow discord and scatter their poison in every place, in vain can we hope, without coming to the last extremities, to bring the leaders of this deluded people to a sense of their duty.

‘To deny that the legislative power of Great Britain is entire, general and sovereign, over all parts of its dominions, appears to me too puerile to merit a serious answer. What I would say is, that, under this cover of rights, under this color of privileges, under these pretexts of immunities, the good and loyal Americans have concealed a design, not new, but now openly declared, to cast off every species of superiority, and become altogether an independent nation. They complained of the stamp act. It was repealed. Did this satisfy them? On the contrary, they imbibed more than ever our respective relations; now refusing to indemnify the victims of their violence, and now to rescind resolutions that were so many strides towards rebellion. And yet, in these cases, there was no question of taxes, either internal or external. A duty was afterwards imposed on glass, paper, colors, and tea. They revolted anew; and the bounty of this too indulgent mother again revoked the greater part of these duties; leaving only that upon tea, which may yield, at the utmost, sixteen thousand pounds sterling. Even this inconsiderable impost, Great Britain, actuated by a meekness and forbearance without example, would have repealed also, if the colonists had peaceably expressed their wishes to this effect. At present, they bitterly complain of the regular troops sent amongst them to maintain the public repose. But, in the name of God, what is the cause of their presence in Boston? American disturbances. If the colonists had not first interrupted the general tranquillity, if they had respected property, public and private; if they had not openly resisted the laws of parliament and the ordinances of the king, they would not have seen armed soldiers within their walls. But the truth is, they expressly excite the causes, in order to be able afterwards to bemoan the effects. When they were menaced with real danger, when they were beset by enemies from within and from without, they not only consented to admit regular troops into the very heart of their pro-

vinces, but urged us, with the most earnest solicitations, to send them; but now the danger is past, and the colonists, by our treasure and blood, are restored to their original security, now these troops have become necessary to repress the factious, to sustain the action of the laws, their presence is contrary to the constitution, a manifest violation of American liberty, an attempt to introduce tyranny; as if it were not the right and the obligation of the supreme authority, to protect the peace of the interior as well as that of the exterior, and to repress internal as effectually as external enemies.

‘As though the Americans were fearful of being called, at a future day, to take part in the national representation, they preoccupy the ground, and warn you, in advance, that, considering their distance, they cannot be represented in the British parliament; which means, if I am not deceived, that they will not have a representative power in common with England, but intend to enjoy one by themselves, perfectly distinct from this of the parent state. But why do I waste time in these vain subtleties? Not content with exciting discord at home, with disturbing all the institutions of social life, they endeavor also to scatter the germs of division in the neighboring colonies, such as Nova Scotia, the Floridas, and especially Canada. Nor is this the end of their intrigues. Have we not read here, in this land of genuine felicity, the incendiary expressions of their address to the English people, designed to allure them to the side of rebellion? Yes; they have wished, and with all their power have attempted, to introduce into the bosom of this happy country, outrage, tumults, devastation, pillage, bloodshed, and open resistance to the laws! A thousand times undone the English people, should they suffer themselves to be seduced by the flatteries of the Americans! The sweet peace, the inestimable liberty, they now enjoy, would soon be replaced by the most ferocious anarchy, devouring their wealth, annihilating their strength, contaminating and destroying all the happiness of their existence. Already have the colonists trampled on all restraints; already have they cast off all human respect; and, amidst their subtle machinations, and the shades in which they envelop themselves, they suffer, as it were, in spite of themselves, their culpable designs to appear. If they have not yet acquired the consistence, they at least assume the forms of an independent nation.

‘Who among us has not felt emotions kindling deep in his breast, or transports of indignation, at the reading of the decrees of congress, in which, with a language and a tone better beseeming the haughty courts of Versailles or of Madrid than the subjects of a great king, they ordain imperiously the cessation of all commerce between their country and our own? We may transport our merchandise and our commodities among all other nations. It is only under the inhospitable skies of America, only in this country, dyed with the blood, and bathed in the sweat, we have shed for the safety and prosperity of



its inhabitants, that English industry cannot hope for protection, cannot find an asylum ! Are we then of a spirit to endure that our subjects trace around us the circle of Popilius, and proudly declare on what conditions they will deign to obey the ancient laws of the common country ? But all succeeds to their wish ; they hope from our magnanimity that war will result, and from war, independence. And what a people is this, whom benefits cannot oblige, whom clemency exasperates, whom the necessity of defence, created by themselves, offends !

‘ If, therefore, no doubt can remain as to the projects of these, ungrateful colonists ; if an universal resistance to the civil government and to the laws of the country ; if the interruption of a free and reciprocal commerce between one part and another of the realm ; if resisting every act of the British legislature, and absolutely, in word and deed, denying the sovereignty of this country ; if laying a strong hand on the revenues of America ; if seizing his majesty’s forts, artillery and ammunition ; if exciting and stimulating, by every means, the whole subjects of America to take arms, and to resist the constitutional authority of Great Britain, are acts of treason, then are the Americans in a state of the most flagrant rebellion. Wherefore, then, should we delay to take resolute measures ? If no other alternative is left us, if it is necessary to use the power which we enjoy, under heaven, for the protection of the whole empire, let us show the Americans that, as our ancestors deluged this country with their blood to leave us a free constitution, we, like men in defiance of faction at home and rebellion abroad, are determined, in glorious emulation of their example, to transmit it, perfect and unimpaired, to our posterity. I hear it said by these propagators of sinister auguries, that we shall be vanquished in this contest. But all human enterprises are never without a something of uncertainty. Are high minded men for this to stand listless, and indolently abandon to the caprices of fortune the conduct of their affairs ? If this dastardly doctrine prevailed, if none would ever act without assurance of the event, assuredly no generous enterprise would ever be attempted ; chance and blind destiny would govern the world. I trust, however, in the present crisis, we may cherish better hopes ; for, even omitting the bravery of our soldiers and the ability of our generals, loyal subjects are not so rare in America as some believe, or affect to believe. And, besides, will the Americans long support the privation of all the things necessary to life, which our numerous navy will prevent from reaching their shores ?

‘ This is what I think of our present situation ; these are the sentiments of a man neither partial nor vehement, but free from all prepossessions, and ready to combat and shed the last drop of his blood, to put down the excesses of license, to extirpate the germs of cruel anarchy, to defend the rights and the privileges of this most innocent

people, whether he finds their enemies in the savage deserts of America, or in the cultivated plains of England.

‘And if there are Catalines among us, who plot in darkness pernicious schemes against the state, let them be unveiled and dragged to light, that they may be offered a sacrifice, as victims to the just vengeance of this courteous country; that their names may be stamped with infamy to the latest posterity, and their memory held in execration, by all men of worth, in every future age!’

The vehemence of these two discourses, excited an extraordinary agitation in the house of commons; after it was calmed, the proposition of the ministers was put to vote and carried, by a majority of two thirds of the house.

Such was the conclusion of the most important affair that for a long time had been submitted to the decision of parliament. The inhabitants of all Europe, as well as those of Great Britain, awaited with eager curiosity, the result of these debates. During their continuance, the foreign ministers, resident in London, attentively watched all the movements of the ministry, and the discussions of parliament, persuaded that whatever might be the decision, it could not fail to prove fertile in events of the highest importance, not only for England, but also for all the other European states.

On the same day was read a petition from the island of Jamaica, very energetic, and totally in favor of the colonies. It displeased, and, as usual, was thrown aside.

The ministers having attained their object, in causing the inhabitants of Massachusetts to be declared rebels, resolved to lay before parliament the system of measures they intended to pursue, in regard to the affairs of America. Having either no adequate idea of the inflexibility of men, inflamed by the zeal of new opinions, or being preoccupied by passion, or perhaps restrained by the timidity of their characters, they persisted in believing, that the Americans would not long endure the privation of their commerce, and thus becoming divided among themselves, would solicit an arrangement. Relying also too implicitly on the assertions of Hutchinson, and other officers of the crown, that had been, or still were in America, who assured them that the friends of England, in the colonies, were powerful in numbers, resources and influence, they no longer hesitated to adopt the most rigorous measures, without supporting them by a commensurate force.

Thus guided, as usual, by their spirit of infatuation, they confided their cause, not to the certain operation of armies, but to the supposed inconstancy and partiality of the American people. Upon such a foundation, lord North proposed a new bill, the object of which was to restrict the commerce of New England to Great Britain, Ireland and the West India islands, and prohibit, at the same time, the fishery of Newfoundland. The prejudice that must have resulted from this

act, to the inhabitants of New England, may be calculated from the single fact, that they annually employed in this business about forty-six thousand tons and six thousand seamen; and the produce realised from it, in foreign markets, amounted to three hundred and twenty thousand pounds sterling. This bill, however, did not pass without opposition in the two houses; on the contrary, the debates and the agitation it excited, were vehement in both. Many of the members exerted all their efforts to defeat it, and more than any, the marquis of Rockingham, who presented, to this end, a petition of the London merchants.

The bill was, however, approved by a great majority. The opposition protested; the ministers scarcely deigned to perceive it.

This prohibition of all foreign commerce, and of the fishery of Newfoundland, at first comprehended only the four provinces of New England; but the ministers finding the parliament placid and docile, afterwards extended it to the other colonies, with the exception of New York and North Carolina. They alleged it was expedient to punish all the provinces which had participated in the league against British commerce and manufactures. This proposition was approved without difficulty. After a few days had transpired, they moved, that the counties situated on the Delaware, New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, should be subjected to the same laws, as they also had manifested a spirit of rebellion. The clause was added. Thus the English ministers employed only partial measures; imitating those little children, who having constructed a dyke of clay for their amusement, are incessantly occupied in stopping, one after another, all the apertures through which the water seeks to escape.

Meanwhile, they had given orders to embark a corps of ten thousand men for America, as they considered this force sufficient to reestablish submission and obedience to the laws; always confidently relying upon the divisions of the Americans, and the great number of those they conceived to be devoted to the British cause. To this error of the ministers must be attributed the length of the war and the termination it had; as it was essential to success, that the first impressions should have been energetic; that the first movements should have compelled the Americans to banish all idea of resistance; in a word, that a sudden display of an overwhelming force should have reduced them to the necessity of immediately laying down arms. But the ministers preferred to trust the issue of this all important contest, to the intrigues, however at all times uncertain, of factions and parties, rather than to the agency of formidable armies.

But the counsels of the ministers ended not here. Wishing to blend with rigor a certain clemency, and also to prevent new occasions of insurrection in America, they brought forward the project of a law, purporting, that when, in any province or colony, the governor, council, assembly, or general court, should propose to make



provision according to their respective conditions, circumstances and faculties, for contributing their proportion to the common defence; such proportion to be raised under the authorities of the general court or assembly in each province or colony, and disposable by parliament; and should engage to make provision also for the support of the civil government, and the administration of justice in such province or colony, it would be proper, if such proposal should be approved by the king in his parliament, and for so long as such provision should be made accordingly, to forbear, in respect of such province or colony, to impose any duties, taxes, or assessment, except only such as might be thought necessary for the regulation of commerce.

If this proposition displeased many among the members of the ministerial party, as being greatly derogatory to the dignity and rights of the parliament, which ought to make no concessions to rebels, while they have arms in their hands; it may be presumed that it was received with every mark of the most violent disapprobation by the adverse party; they declared it to be base, vile, and insidious. But the ministers considered, that whatever might be the fate of the law in America, and even supposing it should not be accepted, the people of England, at least, would be convinced that nothing could subdue the obstinacy of the colonists, and that, as to finances, they were determined to bear no part of the public burthens. According to the views of the ministry, if this law was to produce greater concord in England, it would be likely, they apprehended, to create divisions in America; for if a single province accepted the offer, and consented to an accommodation, the confederacy of the Americans, by which alone they were formidable, dissolved of itself. Lord North, in his discourse to the parliament, did not dissemble this last hope.

The colonists affected to resent this project as a violent outrage; they complained that the minister attempted to follow the too well known maxim of divide and reign; as if the English ministers ought not to consider laudable what they reputed blameable; as if, between declared enemies, things were to be estimated by a common weight and measure!

Such were the sentiments of the ministers respecting American affairs. Meanwhile, those who in England, and even in parliament, favored the cause of the colonists, had not been discouraged by the little success it obtained. They plainly foresaw the extent of the evils to which the Americans would be exposed if the resolutions of the ministers should be executed. Unwilling to fail in their duty to their country, and perhaps also stimulated by ambition, in case things should take an unfortunate direction, they resolved to renew their efforts, to induce, if possible, the government to embrace measures more calculated to calm the exasperated minds of the colonists, and dispose them to concord; for they were very far from believing

that the mode proposed by lord North would have the expected result.

Accordingly, Edmund Burke, one of the members of the house of commons, who, by his genius, his knowledge, and his rare eloquence, had acquired the most brilliant reputation, declared upon this occasion, that it gave him singular satisfaction to find the ministers disposed to make any concessions to the Americans, and since lord North himself had proposed a way which he supposed might lead to conciliation, he accepted it as a most happy augury ; as an avowal, that in the present question, no regard was to be had for vain imaginations, for abstract ideas of rights, and general theories of government, but on the contrary, that it was essential to reason from the nature of things, from actual circumstances, from practice, and from experience.

He then entered into an accurate investigation of the actual state of the colonies ; he considered their situation, extent, wealth, population, agriculture, commerce, with their power and weight in the scale of empire. He adverted to that invincible spirit of freedom which distinguishes them in so peculiar a manner from all other people. He observed, that while Great Britain had governed America, conformably to all these circumstances, both countries had been united and happy ; and that to reestablish this prosperous state of things, it was only necessary to resume the accustomed system of government. In examining the different plans proposed for the government of America, he animadverted particularly upon that of force ; a method which, as the most simple and easy to comprehend, men were apt to have recourse to in all difficult circumstances ; without reflecting that what appears the most expeditious, is frequently the least expedient. He remarked, that the utility of employing force, depended upon times and circumstances, which were always variable and uncertain ; that it destroyed the very objects of preservation ; that it was a mode of governing hitherto unknown in the colonies, and therefore dangerous to make trial of ; that their flourishing condition, and the benefits thence resulting to England, were owing to quite other causes, to a method totally different ; that all discussions of right and of favors, should be disclaimed in such a subject ; the surest rule to govern the colonies was to call them to participate in the free constitution of England, by giving the Americans the guaranty of parliament, that Great Britain shall never depart from the principles which shall be once established ; that, in such matters, it was better to consult prudence than cavil about right ; that the solemn doctors of the laws had nothing to do with this affair ; that practice was always a wiser counsellor than speculation ; that experience had already marked the road to be taken on this occasion ; it had long been followed with advantage and safety ; that this tested system could not be resumed too soon,

by abandoning all new and extraordinary projects. He concluded by saying, that, as there existed no reason for believing that the colonists would be less disposed in future to grant subsidies, voluntarily, than they had been in times past, he would have the secretaries of state address the customary requisitions to their assemblies.

The ministers rose to reply ; and this time, a thing rather strange, and not to have been expected from the partisans of lord Bute, they demonstrated great solicitude for liberty ; so true it is, that if sometimes the promoters of popular anarchy, as also those of absolute power, frequently vociferate the name of liberty, it is because they know that if the people cannot love what oppresses them, they may at least easily be deceived by the appearance and the name alone of that which constitutes their happiness. Accordingly, the ministers declared, that it would be a dangerous thing for liberty, if the colonies could, without the consent of parliament, and simply upon the requisition of ministers, grant subsidies to the crown.

‘ Besides,’ they added, ‘ the colonial assemblies have never had the legal faculty to grant subsidies of themselves ; it is a privilege peculiar to parliament, which cannot be communicated to any other body whatsoever. We read, in the Declaration of Rights, “ that levying money for the use of the crown, by pretence of prerogative, and without the consent of parliament, is an act contrary to law.” ’ A minister who should suffer the grant of any sort of revenues from the colonies to the crown, without the consent of parliament, would be liable to impeachment. Although, in time of war, and from the urgency of circumstances, this abuse has sometimes been tolerated, it could not be admitted in times of peace, without the total subversion of the constitution. What will be the consequence, if the parliament once divests itself of the right to tax the colonies ? It will no longer be possible to ground calculations upon any subsidies on their part ; for, because they have furnished them heretofore, can it be inferred that they will always furnish them in future ? It may happen, that on some pressing occasion they will refuse ; and if they should, what means will remain to enforce their contributions ? Finally, if they passed resolutions for levying money in the last war, it was because their own interests were concerned, and the dangers immediately menaced themselves ; but, in other circumstances, and for interests more remote, whether they would furnish similar subsidies, appears extremely doubtful.’

Such was the answer of the ministers. The motion of Burke was rejected ; not, however, without causing pain to many among the English, who ardently desired that some means might be devised, by which a reconciliation could be effected. But such were not the impressions of the still greater number that adhered to the party of the ministers. In the present state of things, the affair of taxation was, or appeared to have become, the least important part of the



controversy ; the quarrel, increasing in virulency, had extended to other objects of still greater moment, and concerning the very nature of the government.

The ministerial party entertained the most violent suspicions, that, under this shadow of pretensions about taxes and constitutional liberty, machinations were concealed, tending to alter the form of government, to propagate, and perhaps to realize, those ideas of a republic which had occasioned in England so much discord and so many wars.

The present partisans of liberty in America, and those who favored them in Great Britain, much resembled those of times past ; and it was apprehended they were plotting the same designs. The least partiality for the cause of the Americans was viewed as a criminal scheme against the state ; all those who declared themselves in their favor were considered as an audacious set of men, full of ambition and obstinacy, who, to acquire power and gratify their vengeance, would have involved the whole empire in devastation and carnage. It was believed, that, as fathers leave their inheritance to their children, the patriots of the times of the revolution had transmitted the venom of their opinions to those of the present epoch ; and that these, by means of the American revolution, were seeking to accomplish their pernicious plots. The insurrection of the colonies, and the intestine dissensions in England, seemed to be the prelude of their nefarious purposes. It appeared manifest, that, in the expectation of future events, unable as yet to make themselves masters of the state, they had formed a conspiracy to attack incessantly those who governed it, with their odious imputations and incendiary clamors. In effect, the partisans of the Americans had, for some time, abandoned themselves to the most extraordinary proceedings. They observed no human respect,—no sort of measure ; all ways, all means, they reputed honest, if conducive to their purposes. Consequently, in a discussion sustained with so much vehemence, and imbibed by the remembrance of ancient outrages, every motion in favor of the Americans was interpreted in the most unfavorable manner. It was thought that Great Britain had no interest in coming to an accommodation with her colonists, until this republican spirit was first put down and extinguished ; and, as this could not be effected but by force of arms, the friends of government wished they might be employed ; ‘Whatever,’ said they, ‘may be the result of mild counsels, they will but palliate the evil,—not effect its cure ; it will reappear on the first favorable occasion, more formidable than ever.’

Such were the prevailing opinions, both within and without the parliament. To these apprehensions must be attributed, principally, the harsh reception encountered by all the propositions for an accommodation, which were made by the friends of the Americans. The

ministers, besides, were persuaded that the insurrection of the colonies proceeded rather from a popular effervescence than a concerted plan ; and that this flame would expire, as promptly as it had been kindled.

Propositions of arrangement, and petitions, continued, however, still to be offered ; but perhaps they were made merely because it was known they would be rejected, as they were in effect. Thus were extinguished all hopes of reconciliation ; thus the last extremities were rendered inevitable ; thus was announced the precipitate approach of war ; and good citizens perceived, with horror, the calamities about to fall upon their country.

Meanwhile, the horizon became every day more lowering, in America ; and civil war seemed only waiting the signal to explode. The congress of Massachusetts had passed a resolution for the purchase of all the gunpowder that could be found, and of every sort of arms and ammunition requisite for an army of fifteen thousand men. This decree was executed with the utmost solicitude ; and, as these objects abounded principally in Boston, the inhabitants employed all their address to procure and transport them to places of safety in the country, by deceiving the vigilance of the guard stationed upon the isthmus. Cannon, balls, and other instruments of war, were carried through the English posts, in carts apparently loaded with manure ; powder, in the baskets or panniers of those who came from the Boston market ; and cartridges were concealed in candle boxes.

Thus the provincials succeeded in their preparations ; but, as it was feared that general Gage might send detachments to seize the military stores in places where they were secreted, men were chosen to keep watch at Charlestown, Cambridge and Roxbury, and be ready to despatch couriers to the towns where the magazines were kept, as often as they should see any band of soldiers issuing from Boston. General Gage was not asleep. Having received intimation that several pieces of artillery were deposited in the neighborhood of Salem, he sent a detachment of the garrison at the castle to seize them, and return to Boston. They landed at Marblehead, and proceeded to Salem ; but without finding the object of their search. They had to pass a drawbridge, which formed the communication with Danvers, where the people had collected in great numbers. The bridge had been drawn, to impede the passage of the royal troops ; the captain in command ordered the bridge down ; the people refused ; and a warm altercation ensued with the soldiers. A sinister event appeared inevitable. At this juncture, came up a clergyman, named Bernard, a man of great authority with the people, who persuaded them to let down the bridge. The soldiers passed it ; and having made a slight incursion on the other side, in token of the liberty they had obtained to scour the country, they returned peaceably on board. But the country people had already

concealed, in places more secure, the artillery and ammunition. Accordingly, the expedition of general Gage completely failed of success.

Thus, by the prudence of a single man, the effusion of blood was prevented ; of which the danger was eminent. The resistance, however, which the soldiers encountered, had greatly exasperated their minds ; and if, before, the people of Boston lived in a state of continual jealousy, after this event, the reciprocal irritation and rancor had so increased, that it was feared, every moment, the soldiers and the citizens would come to blows.

But war being momentarily expected, the particular fate of the inhabitants of Boston had become the object of general solicitude. The garrison was formidable ; the fortifications carried to perfection ; and little hope remained that this city could be wrested from British domination. Nor could the citizens flatter themselves more with the hope of escaping by sea, as the port was blockaded by a squadron. Thus confined amidst an irritated soldiery, the Bostonians found themselves exposed to endure all the outrages to be apprehended from military license. Their city had become a close prison, and themselves no better than hostages in the hands of the British commanders. This consideration alone sufficed greatly to impede all civil and military operations projected by the Americans. Various expedients were suggested, in order to extricate the Bostonians from this embarrassing situation ; which, if they evinced no great prudence, certainly demonstrated no ordinary obstinacy. Some advised, that all the inhabitants of Boston should abandon the city, and take refuge in other places, where they should be succoured at the public expense ; but this design was totally impracticable ; since it depended on general Gage to prevent its execution. Others recommended, that a valuation should be made of the houses and furniture belonging to the inhabitants, that the city should then be fired, and that all the losses should be reimbursed from the public treasure. After mature deliberation, this project was also pronounced not only very difficult, but absolutely impossible to be executed. Many inhabitants, however, left the city privately, and withdrew into the interior of the country ; some, from disgust at this species of captivity ; others, from fear of the approaching hostilities ; and others, finally, from apprehensions of being questioned for acts against the government ; but a great number, also, with a firm resolution, preferred to remain, and brave all consequences whatever. The soldiers of the garrison, weary of their long confinement, desired to sally forth, and drive away these rebels, who interrupted their provisions, and for whom they cherished so profound a contempt. The inhabitants of Massachusetts, on the other hand, were proudly indignant at this opinion of their cowardice, entertained by the soldiers ; and panted for an occasion to prove, by a signal vengeance, the falsehood of the reproach.



In the meantime, the news arrived of the king's speech at the opening of parliament ; of the resolutions adopted by that body ; and, finally, of the act by which the inhabitants of Massachusetts were declared rebels. All the province flew to arms ; indignation became fury,—obstinacy, desperation. All idea of reconciliation had become chimerical ; necessity stimulated the most timid ; a thirst of vengeance fired every breast. The match is lighted,—the materials disposed,—the conflagration impends. The children are prepared to combat against their fathers ; citizens against citizens ; and, as the Americans declared, the friends of liberty against its oppressors,—against the founders of tyranny.

‘In these arms,’ said they, ‘in our right hands, are placed the hope of safety, the existence of country, the defence of property, the honor of our wives and daughters. With these alone can we repulse a licentious soldiery, protect what man holds dearest upon earth, and unimpaired transmit our rights to our descendants. The world will admire our courage ; all good men will second us with their wishes and prayers, and celebrate our names with immortal praises. Our memory will become dear to posterity. It will be the example, as the hope of freemen, and the dread of tyrants, to the latest ages. It is time that old and contaminated England should be made acquainted with the energies of America, in the prime and innocence of her youth ; it is time she should know how much superior are our soldiers in courage and constancy, to vile mercenaries. We must look back no more ! We must conquer or die ! We are placed between altars smoking with the most grateful incense of glory and gratitude, on the one part, and blocks and dungeons on the other. Let each then rise, and gird himself for the combat. The dearest interests of this world command it ; our most holy religion enjoins it ; that God, who eternally rewards the virtuous, and punishes the wicked, ordains it. Let us accept these happy auguries ; for already the mercenary satellites, sent by wicked ministers to reduce this innocent people to extremity, are imprisoned within the walls of a single city, where hunger emaciates them, rage devours them, death consumes them. Let us banish every fear, every alarm ; fortune smiles upon the efforts of the brave !’

By similar discourses, they excited one another, and prepared themselves for defence. The fatal moment is arrived ; the signal of civil war is given.

General Gage was informed, that the provincials had amassed large quantities of arms and ammunition, in the towns of Worcester and Concord ; which last is eighteen miles distant from the city of Boston. Excited by the loyalists, who had persuaded him that he would find no resistance, considering the cowardice of the patriots, and perhaps not imagining that the sword would be drawn so soon, he resolved to send a few companies to Concord, in order to seize

the military stores deposited there, and transport them to Boston, or destroy them. It was said also, that he had it in view, by this sudden expedition, to get possession of the persons of John Hancock and of Samuel Adams, two of the most ardent patriot chiefs, and the principal directors of the provincial congress, then assembled in the town of Concord. But to avoid exciting irritation, and the popular tumults, which might have obstructed his design, he resolved to act with caution, and in the shade of mystery. Accordingly, he ordered the grenadiers, and several companies of light infantry, to hold themselves in readiness to march out of the city, at the first signal; adding, that it was in order to pass review, and execute different manœuvres and military evolutions. The Bostonians entertained suspicions; and sent to warn Adams and Hancock to be upon their guard. The committee of public safety gave directions that the arms and ammunition should be distributed about in different places. Meanwhile, general Gage, to proceed with more secrecy, commanded a certain number of officers, who had been made acquainted with his designs, to go, as if on a party of pleasure, and dine at Cambridge, which is situated very near Boston, and upon the road to Concord. It was on the 18th of April, in the evening, these officers dispersed themselves here and there upon the road and passages, to intercept the couriers that might have been despatched to give notice of the movement of the troops. The governor gave orders that no person should be allowed to leave the city; nevertheless, doctor Warren, one of the most active patriots, had timely intimation of the scheme, and immediately despatched confidential messengers; some of whom found the roads interdicted by the officers that guarded them; but others made their way unperceived to Lexington, a town upon the road leading to Concord. The intelligence was soon divulged; the people flocked together, the bells, in all parts, were rung to give the alarm; the continual firing of cannon spread the agitation through all the neighboring country. In the midst of this tumultuous scene, at eleven in the evening, a strong detachment of grenadiers, and of light infantry, was embarked at Boston, and went to take land at a place called Phipps' Farm, whence they marched towards Concord. In this state of things, the irritation had become so intense, that a spark only was wanting, to produce an explosion; as the event soon proved.

The troops were under the command of lieutenant-colonel Smith, and major Pitcairn, who led the vanguard. The militia of Lexington, as the intelligence of the movement of this detachment was uncertain, had separated in the course of the night. Finally, at five in the morning of the 19th, advice was received of the near approach of the royal troops. The provincials, that happened to be near, assembled to the number of about seventy, certainly too few to have had the intention to engage in combat. The English appeared, and

major Pitcairn cried in a loud voice, 'Disperse rebels, lay down arms, and disperse.' The provincials did not obey, upon which he sprung from the ranks, discharged a pistol, and, brandishing his sword, ordered his soldiers to fire. The provincials retreated; the English continuing their fire, the former faced about to return it.

Meanwhile, Hancock and Adams retired from danger; and it is related, that while on the march, the latter, enraptured with joy, exclaimed, 'Oh! what an ever glorious morning is this!' considering this first effusion of blood as the prelude of events which must secure the happiness of his country. The soldiers advanced towards Concord. The inhabitants assembled, and appeared disposed to act upon the defensive, but seeing the numbers of the enemy, they fell back, and posted themselves on the bridge, which is found north of the town, intending to wait for reenforcements from the neighboring places; but the light infantry assailed them with fury, routed them, and occupied the bridge, whilst the others entered Concord, and proceeded to the execution of their orders. They spiked two pieces of twenty-four pound cannon, destroyed their carriages, and a number of wheels for the use of the artillery; threw into the river, and into wells, five hundred pounds of bullets, and wasted a quantity of flour deposited there by the provincials. These were the arms and provisions which gave the first occasion to a long and cruel war!

But the expedition was not yet terminated; the minute-men arrived, and the forces of the provincials were increased by continual accessions from every quarter. The light infantry who scoured the country above Concord, were obliged to retreat, and on entering the town a hot skirmish ensued. A great number were killed on both sides. The light infantry having joined the main body of the detachment, the English retreated precipitately towards Lexington; already the whole country had risen in arms, and the militia, from all parts, flew to the succour of their own. Before the British detachment had arrived at Lexington, its rear guard and flanks suffered great annoyance from the provincials, who, posted behind the trees, walls, and frequent hedges, kept up a brisk fire, which the enemy could not return. The soldiers of the king found themselves in a most perilous situation.

General Gage, apprehensive of the event, had despatched, in haste, under the command of Lord Percy, a reenforcement of sixteen companies, with some marines, and two field pieces. This corps arrived very opportunely at Lexington, at the moment when the royal troops entered the town from the other side, pursued with fury by the provincial militia.

It appears highly probable, that, without this reenforcement, they would have been all cut to pieces, or made prisoners; their strength was exhausted, as well as their ammunition. After making a considerable halt at Lexington, they renewed their march towards Bos-



ton, the number of the provincials increasing every moment, although the rear guard of the English was less molested, on account of the two field pieces, which repressed the impetuosity of the Americans. But the flanks of the column remained exposed to a very destructive fire, which assailed them from all the points adapted to serve as coverts. The royalists were also annoyed by the heat, which was excessive, and by a violent wind, which blew a thick dust in their eyes. The enemy's marksmen, adding to their natural celerity a perfect knowledge of the country, came up unexpectedly through cross roads, and galled the English severely, taking aim especially at the officers, who, perceiving it, kept much on their guard. Finally, after a march of incredible fatigue, and a considerable loss of men, the English, overwhelmed with lassitude, arrived at sunset in Charlestown. Independently of the combat they had sustained, the ground they had measured that day was above five and thirty miles. The day following they crossed over to Boston.

Such was the affair of Lexington, the first action which opened the civil war. The English soldiers, and especially their officers, were filled with indignation at the fortune of the day; they could not endure, that an undisciplined multitude, that a flock of Yankees, as they contemptuously named the Americans, should not only have maintained their ground against them, but even forced them to show their backs, and take refuge behind the walls of a city. The provincials, on the contrary, felt their courage immeasurably increased, since they had obtained a proof that these famous troops were not invincible, and had made so fortunate an essay of the goodness of their arms.

Both parties were at great pains to prove that their adversaries had been the aggressors. The English insisted, that the Americans had fired first from the houses of Lexington, and that this provocation had forced the British troops to fire also, and to march thence to Concord. The Americans denied the fact, and affirmed very positively, that major Pitcairn had commanded his detachment to fire, when, on their part, they continued to observe a perfect calm; and many judicial certificates and solemn depositions were made to this effect. Certain it is, that lieutenant-colonel Smith, was much displeased that his troops had fired; and it seems probable, that general Gage had given orders not to fire, except in case of a real attack on the part of the provincials. If it be true, therefore, as there is much reason to believe, that the first firing came from the soldiers of the king, this ought to be imputed rather to the imprudence of major Pitcairn than to any other order or cause.

The two parties also reciprocally accused each other, as it usually happens in civil wars, of many and horrible cruelties. The Americans pretended that the English had burnt and plundered several houses, destroying what they were unable to carry away, and that

they had even massacred several individuals without defence. The English, on the contrary, affirmed, that several of their comrades, made prisoners by the rebels, had been tortured and put to death with savage barbarity. They even related, a thing horrible to repeat, that one of the wounded English, being left behind, and endeavoring, with great efforts, to rejoin his corps, was assailed by a young American, who ferociously split open his skull with an axe, and forced out the brains, for his sport. We dare not affirm the truth of this abominable fact; although we find it related, as not doubtful, by authors worthy of credit; but we can at least attest the falsehood of a report which had at the time much currency. It was rumored, that the inhabitants of New England, imitating, in their fanatical rage, the barbarity of the savages, their neighbors, had severed the scalp, torn out the eyes, and cut off the ears of many English soldiers, both wounded and dead. It is pleasing to think, and authorities are not wanting to affirm, that these imputations are excessively exaggerated, both on the one part and on the other; and if any excesses were committed in the heat of battle, it is certain that after the action was over, humanity recovered its rights. It is known with perfect assurance, that the wounded, who fell into the hands of the provincial militia, were treated with all the cares and attentions in use among the most civilised nations. The Americans even gave notice to general Gage, that he was at liberty to send surgeons to dress and attend the wounded that were found in their hands.

This first feat of arms had two results; the first was to demonstrate how false and ridiculous were the vaunts of those Gascons, who, within parliament as well as without, had spoken in such unworthy terms of American courage; from this moment the English nation, and especially its soldiers, persuaded themselves that the struggle would be far more severe and more sanguinary, than had been at first believed. The second effect of this combat was, to increase astonishingly the confidence of the colonists, and their resolution to defend their rights. It should be added, also, that the reports of the cruelties committed by the British troops, which, whether true or false, the leaders never failed to propagate and exaggerate, in every place, repeating them with words of extreme vehemence, and painting them in the most vivid colors, had produced an incredible fermentation, and a frantic rage in the minds of the inhabitants. To give, if it were possible, still greater activity to these transports of hatred and fury, the obsequies of the slain were celebrated with every mark of honor, their eulogies were pronounced, they were styled the martyrs of liberty; their families were the object of universal veneration. They were continually cited as the models to be imitated in the arduous contest which America was forced into, by the injustice and the pride of English supremacy.

The provincial congress of Massachusetts was then in session at Watertown, ten miles distant from Boston. Upon the news of the battle of Lexington, it addressed a long letter to the English people, containing the most circumstantial details of this event; the congress endeavored to prove that the royal troops had been the first to engage battle, by firing upon the peaceable militia; and by committing at Concord, as well as at Lexington, many excesses, absolutely unworthy of the British name. They entreated the English nation to interfere, and avert the ulterior calamities which were about to fall upon the colonies and Great Britain; they declared and protested their loyalty; at the same time they affirmed it was their firm and irrevocable resolution not to submit to any species of tyranny; they appealed to heaven for the justice of a cause for which they were prepared to sacrifice their fortunes, and, if necessary, existence itself.

But, not content with words, and desirous of giving a regular direction to the war, and to the movements of the people, who assembled every where in tumultuary crowds, they assigned a fixed pay to the officers and soldiers; they made regulations for organising and disciplining the militia. In order to be able to meet the expenses, which were rendered necessary by circumstances, the congress issued a certain quantity of bills of credit, which were to be received as money, in all payments; and for the guaranty of which, they pledged the faith of the province. They declared that general Gage, having sent armed soldiers to destroy what existed in the public magazines in the town of Concord, a violence which had occasioned the illegal and barbarous death of a great number of the inhabitants of the province, was no longer entitled to receive any obedience, but ought, on the contrary, to be regarded as an enemy to the country.

The congress also resolved, that a levy should be made in the province, of thirteen thousand six hundred men, and chose for their general, colonel Ward, an officer of much reputation. This militia was designed to form the contingent of Massachusetts; the provinces of New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, were invited to furnish theirs, in order to complete an army of thirty thousand men, to be commanded by general John Thomas, an officer of great experience. Connecticut despatched immediately a considerable corps, under the command of colonel Putnam, an old officer, who, in the two late wars, had often given proof of courage and intelligence. The other provinces were not slow in causing their standards to move, and, in a short time, an army of thirty thousand men was found assembled under the walls of Boston. So great and so universal was the ardor produced among the inhabitants by the battle of Lexington, that the American generals were obliged to send back to their homes many thousand volun-



teers. Putnam took his station at Cambridge, and Thomas at Roxbury, upon the right wing of the army, to cut off entirely the communication of the garrison, by the isthmus, with the adjacent country. Thus, a few days after the affair of Lexington, the capital of the province of Massachusetts was closely besieged ; thus, a multitude assembled in haste, of men declared rebels, and mean spirited cowards, held in strict confinement, not daring to sally forth even to procure food, many thousands of veteran troops, commanded by an able general, and combating under the royal standard. Such was the situation of troops which had been sent from Europe with the firm expectation that they would only have to show themselves, in order to drive before them all the inhabitants of a country, infinitely more vast and more difficult to traverse than England itself. But, in all times, regular troops have regarded with disdain the militia of an insurgent people ; and often has this militia baffled all the efforts of regular armies.

END OF BOOK FOURTH.

## NOTE TO BOOK IV.

NOTE I.—PAGE 128.

NAMES OF MEMBERS COMPOSING THE CONGRESS OF 1774.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE.

JOHN SULLIVAN,  
NATHANIEL FULSON.

### MASSACHUSETTS.

JAMES BOWDOIN,  
THOMAS CUSHING,  
SAMUEL ADAMS,  
JOHN ADAMS,  
ROBERT T. PAINE.

### RHODE ISLAND.

STEPHEN HOPKINS,  
SAMUEL WARD.

### CONNECTICUT.

ELIPHALET DYER,  
ROGER SHERMAN,  
SILAS DEANE.

### NEW YORK.

JAMES DUANE,  
HENRY WISNER,  
JOHN JAY,  
PHILIP LIVINGSTON,  
ISAAC LOW,  
JOHN ALSOP,  
WILLIAM FLOYD.

### NEW JERSEY.

JAMES KINSEY,  
WILLIAM LIVINGSTON,  
JOHN DE HART,  
STEPHEN CRANE,  
RICHARD SMITH.

### PENNSYLVANIA.

JOSEPH GALLOWAY,  
CHARLES HUMPHREYS,

SAMUEL RHOADS,  
GEORGE ROSS,  
JOHN MORTON,  
THOMAS MIFFLIN,  
EDWARD BIDDLE,  
JOHN DICKINSON.

### DELAWARE.

CÆSAR RODNEY,  
THOMAS M'KEAN,  
GEORGE READ.

### MARYLAND.

ROBERT GOLDSBOROUGH,  
THOMAS JOHNSON,  
WILLIAM PACA,  
SAMUEL CHASE,  
MATTHEW TILGHMAN.

### VIRGINIA.

PEYTON RANDOLPH,  
RICHARD HENRY LEE,  
GEORGE WASHINGTON,  
PATRICK HENRY,  
RICHARD BLAND,  
BENJAMIN HARRISON,  
EDMUND PENDLETON.

### NORTH CAROLINA.

WILLIAM HOOPER,  
JOSEPH HUGHES,  
RICHARD CASWELL.

### SOUTH CAROLINA.

HENRY MIDDLETON,  
JOHN RUTLEDGE,  
THOMAS LYNCH,  
CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN,  
EDWARD RUTLEDGE.

## BOOK FIFTH.

1775. BOSTON is situated near the middle of the province of Massachusetts, upon a tract of land, which, connecting with the continent by an extremely narrow tongue, called the neck, afterwards distends sufficiently to comprehend a city of very ample dimensions. The figure of this peninsula is irregular, and forms, alternately, bays and promontories. In one of these bays, facing towards the east, is found the port, which is admirably adapted to receive ships of any burthen, as well of war as of commerce. Towards the north, the land branches into two parts, resembling horns; one of which, pointing to the northeast, is called Hudson's Point; and the other, bearing to the northwest, Barton's Point. In front of these two points, another peninsula is perceived, which, from the name of a considerable town there situated, opposite Boston, is called Charlestown, and is joined to the main land by an exceedingly narrow neck, which also bears the name of Charlestown. An arm of the sea, about half a mile in breadth, enters between the points of Hudson, of Barton, and of Charlestown; and, then expanding, embraces all the western part of the peninsula of Boston. A number of streams empty themselves into this cove; the principal of which, are Muddy, Charles, and Mystic, or Medford, rivers. Not far from the isthmus of Boston, the continent stretches into the sea, and forms a long promontory, which extends, on the right, towards the east; from which results another peninsula, though joined to the main land by a much wider neck than either that of Boston or of Charlestown; these are known by the appellations of Dorchester Neck, and Point. The peninsulas of Charlestown, and of Dorchester, are so near to that of Boston, that batteries placed upon either can reach the city with their shot. This can be done with the greater facility, as in both there are many hills, or eminences, peculiarly favorable for the position of artillery. There is one, above the village of Charlestown, called Breed's Hill, which commands the city of Boston; and another, behind it, towards Charlestown Neck, and consequently further from Boston, which bears the name of Bunker's Hill. In like manner upon the peninsula of Dorchester are heights, which have the same name; and another, called Nook's Hill, which crowns the spur of land towards Boston. The inlet of the sea, through which the port is approached, is sprinkled with little islands; the most considerable of which are Noddle's, Thompson's, Governor's, Long Island, and Castle Island. West of Boston upon the river Charles, is situated the extensive village of Cambridge; and to the south, at the entrance of the Neck, that of Roxbury.



The American army had rested its left wing upon the river of Medford, and thus intercepted the communication of Charlestown Neck; the centre occupied Cambridge; and the right wing, posted at Roxbury, repressed the garrison on the part of the isthmus, which, being fortified, might have facilitated their sallies and excursions into the country.

In this situation, respectively, the two armies were found; but the number and quality of the combatants, their opinions, their military science, their arms, ammunition and provisions, created a great difference in their condition. The Americans were much superior in number; but this number was subject to continual variations; for that severe discipline, without which neither order nor stability can exist in armies, not being as yet introduced among them, the soldiers joined or quitted their colors, as best suited their inclinations; and fresh bands of volunteers were daily arriving, to take the place of those who had left the camp. They had every kind of food in great abundance, and especially vegetables, so necessary to the health of troops. But their arms were far from being sufficient. They had, in all, but sixteen field pieces, six of which, at the very utmost, were in a condition for service. Their brass pieces, which were few, were of the smallest caliber. They had, however, some heavy iron cannon, with three or four mortars and howitzers, and some scanty provision of balls and bombs. But of powder they were almost totally destitute; for, upon visiting the magazines, only eighty-two half barrels of it were found. A certain quantity, it is true, might have been procured in the neighboring provinces; but this feeble resource would soon be exhausted. Muskets were in abundance; but they were all of different caliber, each having brought his own. They were admirably skilled in the use of this weapon, and therefore well adapted for the service of light troops and skirmishing parties; but in regular battle, they would have made but an indifferent figure. They had no uniforms, and no magazines stocked with provisions; they lived, from day to day, without taking thought for the morrow; but, in these first moments, the zeal of the neighboring country people suffered them to want for nothing. They had no coined money, or very little; but they had bills of credit, which, at this epoch, were current at equal value with gold. The officers wanted due instruction, excepting those few who had served in the preceding wars. They were not even known by their soldiers; for, the organisation of the several corps not being yet completed, the changes in them were continual. Orders were ill executed; every one wished to command, and do according to his own fancy; few deigned to obey. Upon the whole, with the exception of some few regiments, which had been trained in certain provinces by experienced chiefs, the residue had more the appearance of a tumultuary assemblage, than of a regular army. But all these defects were compensated, by the deter-

mined spirit of their minds ; by the zeal of party ; the profound persuasion, in all, of the justice of their cause ; the exhortations of their chiefs, and of the ministers of religion, who neglected no means of daily exciting this people, already of themselves inclined to the enthusiasm of religious ideas, to signalise their firmness and valor in an enterprise pleasing in the sight of heaven and all the good of the human race.

With these feeble preparations, but with this extraordinary ardor, the Americans commenced a war, which every thing announced must prove long, arduous and sanguinary. It was, however, easy to foresee, that, whatever reverses they might have to encounter in the outset, an unshaken constancy must render them eventually triumphant ; for, by preserving all their courage, and acquiring discipline and the science of war, their soldiers could not fail to become equal, in all respects, to any that could be opposed to them.

As to the British troops, they were abundantly provided with all things necessary to enter the field ; their arsenals were glutted with artillery of various caliber, excellent muskets, powder, and arms of every denomination. Their soldiers were all perfectly exercised, accustomed to fatigues and dangers ; they had long been taught the difficult art, so essential in war—to obey. Their minds were full of the recollection of the achievements, by which they had distinguished themselves at various times, in the service of their country, while combating against the most warlike nations of the world. A particular motive added still greatly to the martial resolution of this army—the reflection that they were to combat under the royal standard, which is usually a powerful incentive to military honor. The English, moreover, considered the enemies they were about to encounter, in the light of rebels ; a name that inflamed them with an animosity more intense than simple courage. They panted to avenge themselves for the affront of Lexington ; they could by no means admit that these Americans were able to resist them ; they persisted in viewing them as cowards, who were indebted for their success at Lexington, exclusively to their numbers, and the advantage of ground. They were persuaded that, in the first serious action, in the first regular battle, the colonists would not dare to wait their approach. But, until the arrival of the reenforcements expected from England, prudence exacted a circumspect conduct towards the Americans, whose forces were more than threefold in number. Meanwhile, so strict was the siege, no provisions being permitted to enter the city from the neighboring towns, that fresh meat and all kinds of vegetables, began to become excessively scarce ; and, although the sea was open to the English, and they had a great number of light vessels at their disposal, they could procure no supplies from the coasts of New England ; the inhabitants having driven their cattle into the interior of the country. As to the other provinces, they could obtain

nothing from them by their consent ; and they could not employ force, because they were not yet declared rebels. The scarcity became therefore extreme at Boston. The garrison, as well as the inhabitants, were reduced to salt provisions. The English, therefore, were impatient for the arrival of reinforcements from England, in order to make some vigorous effort to extricate themselves from this difficult situation.

The besieging army, aware that the inhabitants of Boston had no other resource but from the magazines of the king, exercised the greater vigilance to intercept all supplies from the adjacent country ; hoping that the exhaustion of these stores would at length induce the governor to consent that the inhabitants, or at least the women and children, as superfluous mouths, might leave the city. This the provincials had several times requested, very earnestly ; but the governor, notwithstanding the embarrassment he experienced in providing sustenance for the troops, appeared little disposed to listen to the proposition. He considered the inhabitants as so many hostages for the safety of the city and garrison ; being apprehensive the Americans might attempt to carry the place by assault ; of which, however, there was not the least danger, although they had purposely circulated such a rumor. Their generals were too considerate not to perceive how fatal an impression of discouragement must have been made on the public mind, by the miscarriage of so important a stroke, at the very commencement of the war ; and the probabilities in favor of this assault were not great, as the fortifications of the Neck were extremely formidable ; and, on the other hand, there could have been little hope of success, so long as the English had command of the sea, and the movements of a numerous fleet. But, finally, general Gage, urged by necessity, and wishing also to withdraw arms from the hands of the citizens, on whose account he was not without apprehensions, after a long conference with the council of the city, acceded to an arrangement, by which it was stipulated, that all citizens, on giving up their arms, and depositing them in Faneuil Hall, or some other public place, should be at liberty to retire wherever they might think proper, with all their effects ; it was, however, understood, that their arms should, in due time, be restored them. It was also agreed, that thirty carts should be permitted to enter Boston, to take away the moveables of the emigrants ; and that the admiralty should furnish the transports requisite for the same purpose. This compact was at first faithfully observed by the two parties ; the inhabitants deposited their arms, and the general delivered them passports. But soon after, either unwilling to deprive himself entirely of hostages, or apprehensive, as it had been rumored, that the insurgents meditated the design of setting fire to the city, so soon as their partisans should have evacuated it, he pretended that individuals who had gone out to look after the affairs of persons attached to the royal



cause, had been ill treated ; and began to refuse passes. This refusal excited violent complaints, both among the Bostonians and the provincials stationed without. The governor, however, persisted in his resolution. If he afterwards permitted some few citizens to depart, it was only upon condition that they should leave their furniture and effects ; which subjected them to no little detriment and inconvenience. Many of them, who were accustomed to live in a style of great elegance found themselves reduced, by this extraordinary rigor, to an absolute destitution of things of the first necessity. It was also said, and with too much appearance of probability, that, from a certain cruelty, which no motive can excuse, in granting passports, he studied to divide families, separating wives from husbands, fathers from children, brothers from each other ; some obtained permission to depart—others were forced to remain.

The poor and sick might all retreat, without opposition ; but their departure was accompanied with a circumstance, which, if it was not the effect of a barbarous intention, ought at least to have been prevented with the most sedulous care ; among the sick, those were suffered to pass who were attacked with the smallpox, a very mortal disease in America, where it excites the same horror as the plague itself in Europe and in Asia. The contagion spread rapidly, and made frightful ravages among the provincials.

While these things were passing within and about Boston, the other provinces were making their preparations for war with extreme activity. The city of New York itself, in which the English had more friends than in any other on the continent, and which hitherto had manifested so much reserve, at the first news of the battle of Lexington, was seized with a violent emotion, and resolved to make common cause with the other colonies. The inhabitants adopted the resolutions of the general congress, with the determination to persist in them until the entire reestablishment of constitutional laws. They drew up an energetic address to the common council of the city of London, which had shown itself favorable to the cause of the colonies ; they declared, that all the calamities in the train of civil war, could not constrain the Americans to bend to the will of Great Britain ; and that such was the universal sentiment, from Nova Scotia to Georgia ; they conjured the city of London to exert all its endeavors to restore peace between the two parts of the empire ; but as to themselves, they protested their determination never to endure ministerial tyranny.

The inhabitants were all indefatigable in training themselves to the use of arms ; the patriots, to resist England ; and the partisans of the government, forming no inconsiderable number, either because they thought it prudent to go with the current, or to prevent disorders, or to be prepared, with arms in their hands, to declare themselves upon the first occasion. But as the city of New York is entirely

exposed towards the sea, and as the inhabitants could have no hope of defending it against the attack of an English fleet, they resolved to risk nothing by delay, and to seize the arms and ammunition deposited in the royal magazines. The women and children were removed from the seat of danger; which done, they prepared to defend themselves; and, in case they should have lost all hope of resisting the forces of the enemy, it was resolved, horrible as it seems, though but too common in civil wars, to fire the city.

In South Carolina, it was hoped, universally, that perseverance in the resolutions taken against British commerce, would suffice to dispose the government to embrace milder councils. But the intelligence of the rigorous acts of parliament was received there the very day on which was fought the battle of Lexington, the tidings of which arrived a few days after. The inhabitants were struck with surprise, and even with terror; well knowing to what dangers they exposed themselves, in undertaking to wage war with Great Britain; as her formidable squadrons could reach them at all the points of a coast two hundred miles in length, and as they found themselves almost totally destitute of arms or munitions of war; without means to equip their soldiers, without ships, without money, without officers of experience, or skilled in tactics. They were even not without serious apprehensions relative to the negro slaves, formidably numerous in this province. They were accessible to seduction, by gifts and promises; and might be instigated to massacre their masters, at the moment of their most unsuspecting security. The province itself had not been comprehended in the parliamentary proscription; and could not, therefore, without manifest treason, spontaneously take part in rebellion and open war. At length, however, the resolutions inspired by courage, prevailed; and such measures were taken as were deemed best suited to the occasion. On the night subsequent to the advice of the hostilities at Lexington, the inhabitants rushed to the arsenal, and seized all the arms and ammunition it contained, and distributed them among the soldiers in the pay of the province. A provincial congress was convoked; a league was contracted by the delegates, purporting, that the Carolinians considered themselves united, by all the ties of honor and religion, for the defence of their country against all enemies whatsoever; that they were ready to march, whenever and wherever the congress, whether general or provincial, should judge necessary; that they would sacrifice their fortunes and their lives to maintain the public liberty and safety; that they would hold for enemies all those who should refuse to subscribe the league; which was to be in force, until a reconciliation was effected between Great Britain and America, conformably to the principles of the constitution. It was afterwards determined to raise two regiments of infantry, and one of cavalry, called *rangers*. Such was the general ardor, that more officers presented themselves than were

wanted ; the greater part from among the wealthiest and most respectable families of the country. At the same time, an emission was made of bills of credit, which, at this epoch, were received by all the citizens, with the greatest promptitude.

In New Jersey, at the news of the affair at Lexington, the people took possession of the provincial treasure ; and a part of it was destined to pay the troops which were levied at the same time in the province.

At Baltimore, in Maryland, the inhabitants laid a strong hand upon all the military stores that were found in the public magazines ; and, among other arms, fifteen hundred muskets thus fell into their power. A decree was published, interdicting all transportation of commodities to the islands where fisheries were carried on, as also to the British army and fleet stationed at Boston.

The inhabitants of Philadelphia took the same resolution, and appeared, in all respects, equally disposed to defend the common cause. The Quakers themselves, notwithstanding their pacific institutions, could not forbear to participate in the ardor with which their fellow-citizens flew to meet a new order of things.

When Virginia, this important colony, and particularly opposed to the pretensions of England, received the intelligence of the first hostilities, it was found in a state of extreme commotion, excited by a cause, which, though trivial in itself, in the present conjuncture became of serious importance. The provincial congress, convened in the month of March, had recommended a levy of volunteers in each county, for the better defence of the country. The governor, lord Dunmore, at the name of volunteers, became highly indignant ; and conceived suspicions of some pernicious design. Apprehending the inhabitants intended to take possession of a public magazine, in the city of Williamsburgh, he caused all the powder it contained to be removed, by night, and conveyed on board an armed vessel, at anchor in the river *James*. The following morning, the citizens, on being apprised of the fact, were violently exasperated ; they flew to arms, assembled in great numbers, and demonstrated a full determination to obtain restitution of the powder, either by fair means or force. A serious affair was apprehended ; but the municipal council interposed, and, repressing the tumult, despatched a written request to the governor, entreating him to comply with the public desire. They complained, with energy, of the injury received ; and represented the dangers to which they should be exposed, in case of insurrection on the part of the blacks, whose dispositions, from various recent reports, they had too much reason to distrust. The governor answered, that the powder had been removed, because he had heard of an insurrection in a neighboring county ; that he had removed it in the night time to prevent any alarm ; that he was much surprised to hear the people were under arms ; and that he should



not think it prudent to put powder into their hands in such a situation. He assured them, however, that in case of a revolt of the negroes, it should be returned immediately. Tranquillity was re-established ; but, in the evening, an alarm was given, that the soldiers of the ship of war were approaching the city in arms, the people again also took up theirs, and passed the whole night in expectation of an attack.

The governor, not knowing, or unwilling to yield to the temper of the times, manifested an extreme irritation at these popular movements. He suffered certain menaces to fall from his lips, which it would have been far more prudent to suppress. He intimated, that the royal standard would be erected ; the blacks emancipated, and armed against their masters ; a thing no less imprudent than barbarous, and contrary to every species of civilisation ; finally, he threatened the destruction of the city, and to vindicate, in every mode, his own honor, and that of the crown. These threats excited a general fermentation throughout the colony, and even produced an absolute abhorrence towards the government. Thus, incidents of slight importance, assisted by the harsh and haughty humors of the agents of England and America, contributed to accelerate the course of things towards that crisis, to which they tended already, but too strongly, of themselves.

Meanwhile, in the popular meetings that assembled in all the counties of the province, the seizure of the powder, and the menaces of the governor, were condemned with asperity. But, in the county of Hanover, and the country adjacent, the inhabitants were not content with words. They took arms ; and, under the command of Henry, one of the delegates to the general congress, marched against the city of Wilmington, with the design, as they declared openly, not only of obtaining restitution of the powder, but also of securing the public treasure against the attempts of the governor. An hundred and fifty of the most enterprising were already in the suburbs of the city, when a parley was opened, which concluded in an accommodation, and tranquillity was restored ; but it was evident, that the public mind was too much inflamed to admit of its long continuance. The people of the country, however, returned peaceably to their habitations.

The governor fortified his palace to the utmost of his power ; he placed a garrison of marines within, and surrounded it with artillery. He issued a proclamation, by which Henry and his followers were declared rebels. Finally, with an imprudence of conduct unworthy of a magistrate, who ought never, in the exercise of his functions, to suffer himself to be transported with anger, in acrimonious terms, he attributed the present commotions to the disaffection of the people, and their desire to excite a general revolt. These imputations served only to imbitter hatred, and cut off all hope of a better futurity.

In the midst of these divisions between the people of Virginia and the governor, an incident happened, which still added to their violence.

In like manner as doctor Franklin had procured the letters of Hutchinson, some other person had found means to convey from the office of state, the official correspondence of lord Dunmore ; which was transmitted to the Virginian chiefs. Immediately upon its publication, a cry of indignation arose against the governor, for having written things false, and injurious to the province. Thus all reciprocal confidence was destroyed ; the slightest casualty became a serious event, and mutual enmity more and more imbibited the inevitable effects of this misunderstanding.

During these disputes, which, apart from the irritation they supported against the government, could have no considerable influence, of themselves, upon public affairs, the inhabitants of Connecticut attempted an important enterprise.

The road which leads from the English colonies to Canada, is traced almost entirely along the rivers and lakes, which are found between these two countries, and in the direction of south to north. Those who undertake this excursion, begin by ascending the river Hudson, up to fort Edward, whence, keeping to the right, they arrive at Skeenesborough, a fort situated near the sources of Wood creek ; or, bearing to the left, they come to fort George, erected at the southern extremity of the lake of that name. Both the former and the latter afterwards embark, the first upon Wood creek, the second upon lake George, and are landed at Ticonderoga ; at which point, the two lakes unite to form lake Champlain, so called from the name of a French governor, who drowned himself there. By the lake, and thence by the river Soral, which flows out of it, they descend into the great river St. Lawrence, which passes to Quebec. Ticonderoga is then situated near the confluence of these waters, between lake George and lake Champlain. It is therefore a place of the highest importance, as standing upon the frontier, and at the very entrance of Canada ; whoever occupies it can intercept all communication between this province and the colonies. Accordingly, the French had fortified it with such diligence, that the English, in the preceding war, were unable to carry it without extraordinary efforts, and great effusion of blood on both sides.

The chiefs of this expedition, colonels Easton and Allen, considered how essential it was to seize this key of Canada, before the English should have thrown into the place a sufficient garrison for its defence ; for, in the profound peace which prevailed at that time, without apprehension of war either abroad or at home, the governors of Canada had made no preparations at Ticonderoga ; and it was left to the charge of a feeble detachment. It was evident, that if the British government resolved to prosecute war against its colo-

nies, it would send troops into Canada with a view of attacking the Americans in the rear, by the way of Ticonderoga. It was known, besides, that this fortress, and that of Crown Point, situated a little below it, upon the same lake, Champlain, were furnished with a very numerous artillery, of which the Americans stood in the greatest need. Finally, it was thought of no little importance, in these first movements, to strike some capital blow, in order to stimulate the ardor of the insurgent people. Accordingly, this enterprise, having been maturely considered in the plan, and directed with great prudence in the execution, had the result which might have been expected.

It was deemed an essential point, to attack the enemy by surprise ; they resolved, therefore, to proceed with profound secrecy ; for, if the commanders of Ticonderoga and of Crown Point had any suspicion of the project, they could draw reenforcements from the neighboring fortress of St. John. The general Congress itself, then in session at Philadelphia, had no intimation of their design ; its authors being apprehensive, lest, in so great a number of members, there might be found some individual deficient in discretion.

To defray the expenses of the enterprise, the assembly of Connecticut appropriated the sum of eighteen hundred dollars. Powder, bullets, and all the utensils requisite for a siege, were secretly provided. The troops were promptly assembled at Castletown, a place situated upon the banks of Wood creek, and the great road to Ticonderoga. The greater part were inhabitants of the Green Mountains, and thence, in their own style, they were called *Green Mountain Boys* ; a race of men accustomed to fatigue and danger. Among the superior officers, besides Allen and Easton, were colonels Brown and Warner, and captain Dickinson. They were joined at Castletown by colonel Arnold, who came from the army of Boston. Possessed by nature of an extraordinary force of genius, a restless character, and an intrepidity bordering upon prodigy, this officer had of himself conceived the same plan ; so manifest was the utility of the enterprise, and so bold the spirit of these American chiefs. Arnold had conferred, to this end, with the committee of safety of Massachusetts, who had appointed him colonel, with authority to levy soldiers, in order to attempt the capture of Ticonderoga ; in pursuance whereof, he arrived at Castletown ; and his surprise was extreme, at finding himself anticipated. But, as he was not a man to be baffled by trifles, and as nothing could delight him more than the occasion for combat, he concerted with the other leaders, and consented, however hard he must have thought the sacrifice, to put himself under the command of colonel Allen.

They posted sentinels upon all the roads, to prevent the least rumor of their approach from reaching the menaced point ; and they arrived, in the night, upon the bank of lake Champlain, opposite



Ticonderoga. The chief hope of success depending on despatch, Allen and Arnold rapidly surmounted the difficulties of crossing ; and landed upon the other bank, in the environs of the fortress. They continued their march, and at day-break, entering by the covered way, arrived upon the esplanade ; here they raised the shouts of victory, and made a deafening uproar. The soldiers of the garrison roused from sleep at this tumult, and soon commenced firing. A hot scuffle ensued, with gun-breeches and bayonets. The commander of the fort at length appeared ; colonel Easton having informed him that he was prisoner of America, he was much confused, and repeated, several times, '*What does this mean?*' The English threw down arms, and all was surrendered to the victors.

They found, at Ticonderoga, about one hundred and twenty pieces of twenty-four pound brass cannon, several howitzers and mortars, balls, bombs, and ammunition of every denomination. The detachment that was left upon the other bank, having rejoined the first, a party was sent against Crown Point, where the garrison consisted of only a few soldiers. This expedition succeeded without difficulty ; more than an hundred pieces of artillery were found in the fort.

But the plan of the Americans would not have been completely accomplished, except they secured to themselves the exclusive control of the lake ; which they could not hope to obtain, however, without seizing a corvette of war, which the English kept at anchor near fort St. John. They resolved, therefore, to arm a vessel of the species they call *schooners*, the command of which was to be given to Arnold ; while Allen should bring on his men upon the flat boats employed in the navigation of these lakes. The wind blowing fresh from the south, the vessel of Arnold left the boats far in the rear. He came unexpectedly alongside of the corvette, the captain of which was far from suspecting the danger that menaced him, and took possession of it without resistance ; and, as if heaven was pleased to distinguish with evident tokens of its favor these first achievements of the Americans, the wind suddenly changed from south to north, so that, in less than an hour's time, colonel Arnold returned, sound and safe, with his prize, to Ticonderoga.

Things passed no less propitiously for the Americans at Skeenesborough. This fortress fell into their hands, with its garrison ; and thus placed at their disposal a great quantity of light artillery. Colonel Allen put sufficient garrisons in the conquered fortresses, and deputed Arnold to command them in chief. As to himself, he returned directly to Connecticut.

Such was the fortunate issue of the expedition of the Americans upon their northern frontiers. It was no doubt of high importance ; but it would have had a much greater influence upon the course of the whole war, if these fortresses, which are the shield and bulwark

of the colonies, had been defended, in times following, with the same prudence and valor with which they had been acquired.

But about Boston, the course of events was far less rapid. The Americans exerted their utmost industry, to intercept from the English all supplies of provisions; and they, all their endeavors to procure them. This gave occasion to frequent skirmishes between the detachments of the two armies. One of the most severe took place about Noddle's and Hog Island, both situated in the harbor of Boston, northeast of the city; the first opposite Winnesimick, and the second in front of Chelsea, and very near it. These two islands, abounding in forage and cattle, were a great resource for the English, who went there often in quest of provisions. This the provincials resolved to put a stop to, by removing the cattle, and destroying all the provender they could find. They carried their purpose into effect; not, however, without a vigorous opposition on the part of the royalists. The provincials landed a second time upon Noddle's Island, and took off a great number of cattle, of various denominations. They effected the same purpose, a few days after, in Pettick's and Deer Island. In all these actions, they demonstrated the most intrepid courage, and acquired greater confidence in themselves. The garrison of Boston, already suffering greatly from the scarcity of food, experienced, from these operations, a prejudice difficult to describe.

These feats were the prelude to an action of far greater moment, which followed a few days after. The succours expected from England, had arrived at Boston; which, with the garrison, formed an army of from ten to twelve thousand men; all excellent troops. Three distinguished generals, Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne, were at the head of these reenforcements. Great events were looked for on both sides. The English were inflamed with desire to wash out the stain of Lexington; they could not endure the idea that the Americans had seen them fly; it galled them to think, that the soldiers of the British king, renowned for their brilliant exploits, were now closely imprisoned within the walls of a city. They were desirous, at any price, of proving that their superiority over the herds of American militia, was not a vain chimera. Above all, they ardently aspired to terminate, by some decisive stroke, this ignominious war; and thus satisfy, at once, their own glory, the expectations of their country, the orders, the desires, and the promises of the ministers. But victory was exacted of them still more imperiously by the scarcity of food, which every day became more alarming; for, if they must sacrifice their lives, they chose rather to perish by the sword than by famine. The Americans, on their part, were not less eager for the hour of combat to arrive; their preceding successes had stimulated their courage, and promised them new triumphs.

In this state of things, the English generals deliberated maturely upon the most expedient mode of extricating themselves from this difficult position, and placing themselves more at large in the country. Two ways were suggested of issuing from the city ; one, to sally out from the Neck, and attack the American intrenchments at Roxbury ; and, having forced them, to scour the country on the part of the county of Suffolk ; the other was, to pass the ferry of Charlestown, traverse the peninsula of this name, issue by the isthmus, and dislodge the enemy, who occupied the heights between Willis creek and Mystic river ; and then dilate in the direction of Worcester.

General Gage had for some time been decided to attempt the first of these alternatives. He calculated, that in case of a repulse, the fortifications of Boston Neck would secure his retreat. The Americans, having been apprised of it, on the very day appointed for the attack, stood much upon their guard. Whether from this motive, or some other more probable, the English general altered his resolution, and neither marched out on that day nor the following. The provincials took advantage of the delay, and strengthened their intrenchments with parapets and palisades. They also concentrated their artillery, and reenforced this part of the army with all the militia of the adjacent country. All these dispositions were made with so much intelligence, that the English could no longer attempt an attack upon this quarter, without exposing themselves to manifest peril. Accordingly, they abandoned all thoughts of it, and directed their views towards the peninsula and Neck of Charlestown. The American generals had immediate notice of it ; and resolved to exert their most strenuous endeavors to defeat this new project of the enemy. Nothing was better suited to such a purpose, than to fortify diligently the heights of Bunker's Hill, which commanded the entrance and the issue of the peninsula of Charlestown. Orders were therefore given to colonel William Prescott, to occupy them with a detachment of a thousand men, and to intrench himself there by the rules of art. But here an error was committed, which placed the garrison of Boston in very imminent danger, and reduced the two parties to the necessity of coming to action immediately. Whether he was deceived by the resemblance of name, or from some other motive unknown, colonel Prescott, instead of repairing to the heights of Bunker's Hill, to fortify himself there, advanced further on in the peninsula, and immediately commenced his intrenchments upon the heights of Breed's Hill, another eminence, which overlooks Charlestown, and is situated towards the extremity of the peninsula, nearer to Boston. The works were pushed with so much ardor, that the following morning, by day-break, the Americans had already constructed a square redoubt, capable of affording them some shelter from the enemy's fire. The labor had been conducted with such silence, that the English had no suspicion.



of what was passing. It was about four in the morning, when the captain of a ship of war first perceived it, and began to play his artillery. The report of the cannon attracted a multitude of spectators to the shore.

The English generals doubted the testimony of their senses. Meanwhile, the thing appeared too important not to endeavor to dislodge the provincials, or at least to prevent them from completing the fortifications commenced; for, as the height of Breed's Hill absolutely commands Boston, the city was no longer tenable, if the Americans erected a battery upon this eminence. The English therefore opened a general fire of the artillery of the city, of the fleet, and of the floating batteries stationed around the peninsula of Boston. It hailed a tempest of bombs and balls upon the works of the Americans; they were especially incommoded by the fire of a battery planted upon an eminence named Cop's Hill, which, situated within the city, forms a species of tower, in front of Breed's Hill. But all this was without effect. The Americans continued to work the whole day, with unshaken constancy; and, towards night, they had already much advanced a trench, which descended from the redoubt to the foot of the hill, and almost to the bank of Mystic river. The fury of the enemy's artillery, it is true, had prevented them from carrying it to perfection.

In this conjuncture, there remained no other hope for the English generals, but in attempting an assault, to drive the Americans, by dint of force, from this formidable position. This resolution was taken without hesitation; and it was followed, the 17th of June, by the action of Breed's Hill, known also by the name of Bunker's Hill; much renowned for the intrepidity, not to say the temerity, of the two parties; for the number of the dead and wounded; and for the effect it produced upon the opinions of men, in regard to the valor of the Americans, and the probable issue of the whole war.

The right wing of the Americans was flanked by the houses of Charlestown, which they occupied; and the part of this wing which connected with the main body, was defended by the redoubt erected upon the heights of Breed's Hill. The centre, and the left wing, formed themselves behind the trench, which, following the declivity of the hill, extended towards, but without reaching, Mystic river. The American officers having reflected that the most feeble part of their defensive was precisely this extremity of the left wing, for the trench not extending to the river, and the land in this place being smooth and easy, there was danger of being turned, and attacked in the rear, they determined, therefore, to obstruct this passage by two parallel palisades, and to fill up with herbage the interval between the one and the other. The troops of Massachusetts occupied Charlestown, the redoubt, and a part of the trench; those of Connecticut, commanded by captain Nolten, and those of New Hamp-

shire, under colonel Starke, the rest of the trench. A few moments before the action commenced, doctor Warren, who had been appointed general, a personage of great authority, and a zealous patriot, arrived with some reenforcements. General Pomeroy made his appearance, at the same time. The first joined the troops of his own province, of Massachusetts; the second took command of those from Connecticut. General Putnam directed in chief; and held himself ready to repair to any point, where his presence should be most wanted. The Americans had no cavalry; that which was expected from the southern provinces was not yet arrived. The artillery, without being very numerous, was nevertheless competent. They wanted not for muskets; but the greater part were without bayonets. Their sharp shooters, for want of rifles, were obliged to use common firelocks; but as marksmen they had no equals. Such were the means of the Americans; but their hope was great; and they were all impatient for the signal of combat.

Between mid-day and one o'clock, the heat being intense, all was in motion in the British camp. A multitude of sloops and boats, filled with soldiers, left the shore of Boston, and stood for Charlestown; they landed at Moreton's Point, without meeting resistance; as the ships of war and armed vessels effectually protected the debarkation with the fire of their artillery, which forced the enemy to keep within his intrenchments. This corps consisted of ten companies of grenadiers, as many of light infantry, and a proportionate artillery; the whole under the command of major-general Howe, and brigadier-general Pigot. The troops, on landing, began to display, the light infantry upon the right, the grenadiers upon the left; but, having observed the strength of the position, and the good countenance of the Americans, general Howe made a halt, and sent to call a reenforcement.

The English formed themselves in two columns. Their plan was, that the left wing, under general Pigot, should attack the rebels in Charlestown; while the centre assaulted the redoubt; and the right wing, consisting of light infantry should force the passage near the river Mystic, and thus assail the Americans in flank and rear; which would have given the English a complete victory. It appears, also, that general Gage had formed the design of setting fire to Charlestown, when evacuated by the enemy, in order that the corps destined to assail the redoubt, thus protected by the flame and smoke, might be less exposed to the fire of the provincials.

The dispositions having all been completed, the English put themselves in motion. The provincials that were stationed to defend Charlestown, fearing lest the assailants should penetrate between this town and the redoubt; and thus to find themselves cut off from the rest of the army, retreated. The English immediately entered the town, and fired the buildings; as they were of wood, in a moment the combustion became general.

They continued a slow march against the redoubt and trench ; halting, from time to time, for the artillery to come up, and act with some effect, previous to the assault. The flames and smoke of Charlestown were of no use to them, as the wind turned them in a contrary direction. Their gradual advance, and the extreme clearness of the air, permitted the Americans to level their muskets. They however suffered the enemy to approach, before they commenced their fire ; and waited for the assault, in profound tranquillity. It would be difficult to paint the scene of terror presented by these circumstances. A large town, all enveloped in flames, which, excited by a violent wind, rose to an immense height, and spread every moment more and more ; an innumerable multitude, rushing from all parts, to witness so unusual a spectacle, and see the issue of the sanguinary conflict that was about to commence. The Bostonians, and soldiers of the garrison, not in actual service, were mounted upon the spires, upon the roofs, and upon the heights. The hills, and circumjacent fields, from which the dread arena could be viewed in safety, were covered with swarms of spectators, of every rank, and age, and sex ; each agitated by fear or hope, according to the party he espoused.

The English having advanced within reach of musketry, the Americans showered upon them a volley of bullets. This terrible fire was so well supported, and so well directed, that the ranks of the assailants were soon thinned and broken ; they retired in disorder to the place of their landing ; some threw themselves precipitately into the boats. The field of battle was covered with the slain. The officers were seen running hither and thither, with promises, with exhortations, and with menaces, attempting to rally the soldiers, and inspirit them for a second attack. Finally, after the most painful efforts, they resumed their ranks, and marched up to the enemy. The Americans reserved their fire, as before, until their approach, and received them with the same deluge of balls. The English, overwhelmed and routed, again fled to the shore. In this perilous moment, general Howe remained for some time alone upon the field of battle ; all the officers who surrounded him were killed or wounded. It is related, that at this critical conjuncture, upon which depended the issue of the day, general Clinton, who, from Cop's Hill, examined all the movements, on seeing the destruction of his troops, immediately resolved to fly to their succour.

This experienced commander, by an able movement, reestablished order ; and seconded by the officers, who felt all the importance of success, to English honor and the course of events, he led the troops to a third attack. It was directed against the redoubt, at three several points. The artillery of the ships not only prevented all reinforcements from coming to the Americans, by the isthmus of Charlestown, but even uncovered, and swept the interior of the



trench, which was battered in front at the same time. The ammunition of the Americans was nearly exhausted, and they could have no hopes of a recruit. Their fire must, of necessity, languish. Meanwhile, the English had advanced to the foot of the redoubt. The provincials, destitute of bayonets, defended themselves valiantly with the but-end of their muskets. But the redoubt being already full of enemies, the American general gave the signal of retreat, and drew off his men.

While the left wing and centre of the English army were thus engaged, the light infantry had impetuously attacked the palisades, which the provincials had erected, in haste, upon the bank of the river Mystic. On the one side, and on the other, the combat was obstinate ; and if the assault was furious, the resistance was not feeble. In spite of all the efforts of the royal troops, the provincials still maintained the battle in this part ; and had no thoughts of retiring, until they saw the redoubt and upper part of the trench were in the power of the enemy. Their retreat was executed with an order not to have been expected from new levied soldiers. This strenuous resistance of the left wing of the American army, was, in effect, the salvation of the rest ; for, if it had given ground but a few instants sooner, the enemy's light infantry would have taken the main body and right wing in the rear, and their situation would have been hopeless. But the Americans had not yet reached the term of their toils and dangers. The only way that remained of retreat, was by the isthmus of Charlestown, and the English had placed there a ship of war and two floating batteries, the balls of which raked every part of it. The Americans, however, issued from the peninsula, without any considerable loss. It was during the retreat, that doctor Warren received his death. Finding the corps he commanded hotly pursued by the enemy, despising all danger, he stood alone before the ranks, endeavoring to rally his troops, and to encourage them by his own example. He reminded them of the mottos inscribed on their ensigns ; on one side of which were these words, '*An appeal to Heaven ;*' and on the other, '*Qui transtulit, sustinet ;*' meaning, that the same Providence which brought their ancestors through so many perils, to a place of refuge, would also deign to support their descendants.

An English officer perceived doctor Warren, and knew him ; he borrowed the musket of one of his soldiers, and hit him with a ball, either in the head or in the breast. He fell dead upon the spot. The Americans were apprehensive lest the English, availing themselves of victory, should sally out of the peninsula, and attack their head-quarters at Cambridge. But they contented themselves with taking possession of Bunker's Hill, where they intrenched themselves, in order to guard the entrance of the Neck against any new enterprise on the part of the enemy. The provincials, having the

same suspicion, fortified Prospect Hill, which is situated at the mouth of the isthmus, on the side of the main land. But neither the one nor the other were disposed to hazard any new movement ; the first, discouraged by the loss of so many men, and the second, by that of the field of battle and the peninsula. The provincials had to regret five pieces of cannon, with a great number of utensils employed in fortification, and no little camp equipage.

General Howe was greatly blamed by some, for having chosen to attack the Americans, by directing his battery in front against the fortifications upon Breed's Hill, and the trench that descended towards the sea, on the part of Mystic river. It was thought, that if he had landed a respectable detachment upon the isthmus of Charlestown, an operation which the assistance of the ships of war and floating batteries would have rendered perfectly easy to him, it would have compelled the Americans to evacuate the peninsula, without the necessity of coming to a sanguinary engagement. They would thus, in effect, have been deprived of all communication with their camp situated without the peninsula ; and, on the part of the sea, they could have hoped for no retreat, as it was commanded by the English. In this mode, the desired object would, therefore, have been obtained without the sacrifice of men. Such, it is said, was the plan of general Clinton ; but it was rejected, so great was the confidence reposed in the bravery and discipline of the English soldiers, and in the cowardice of the Americans. The first of these opinions was not, in truth, without foundation ; but the second was absolutely chimerical, and evinced more of intellectual darkness in the English, than of prudence, and just notions upon the state of things. By this fatal error, the bravery of the Americans was confirmed, the English army debilitated, the spirit of the soldiers abated, and, perhaps, the final event of the whole contest decided.

The possession of the peninsula of Charlestown was much less useful than prejudicial to the royalists. Their army was not sufficiently numerous to guard, conveniently, all the posts of the city and of the peninsula. The fatigues of the soldiers multiplied in an excessive manner ; added to the heat of the season, which was extreme, they generated numerous and severe maladies, which paralysed the movements of the army, and enfeebled it from day to day. The greater part of the wounds became mortal, from the influence of the climate, and defect of proper food. Thus, besides the honor of having conquered the field of battle, the victors gathered no real fruit from this action ; and, if its effects be considered, upon the opinion of other nations, and even of their own, as also upon the force of the army, it was even of serious detriment. In the American camp, on the contrary, provisions of every sort were in abundance, and the troops being accustomed to the climate, the greater part of the wounded were eventually cured ; their minds were

animated with the new ardor of vengeance, and the blood they had lost exacted a plenary expiation. These dispositions were fortified, not a little, by the firing of Charlestown, which, from a flourishing town, of signal commercial importance, was thus reduced to a heap of ashes and of ruins. The Americans could never turn their eyes in this direction, without a thrill of indignation, and without execrating the European soldiers. But the loss they felt the most sensibly, was that of general Warren. He was one of those men who are more attached to liberty than to existence, but not more ardently the friend of freedom, than foe to avarice and ambition. He was endowed with a solid judgment, a happy genius, and a brilliant eloquence. In all private affairs, his opinion was reputed authority, and in all public counsels, a decision. Friends and enemies, equally knowing his fidelity and rectitude in all things, reposed in him a confidence without limits. Opposed to the wicked, without hatred, propitious to the good, without adulation, affable, courteous and humane towards each, he was beloved, with reverence, by all, and respected by envy itself. Though in his person somewhat spare, his figure was peculiarly agreeable. He mourned, at this epoch, the recent loss of a wife, by whom he was tenderly beloved, and whom he cherished with reciprocal affection. In dying so gloriously for his country, on this memorable day, he left several orphans, still in childhood; but a grateful country assumed the care of their education. Thus was lost to the state, and to his family, in so important a crisis, and in the vigor of his days, a man equally qualified to excel in council or in the field. As for ourselves, faithful to the purpose of history, which dispenses praise to the good and blame to the perverse, we have not been willing that this virtuous and valiant American should be deprived, among posterity, of that honorable remembrance so rightfully due to his eminent qualities.

The expedition of the English against the peninsula of Charlestown, inspired the Americans with a suspicion that they might perhaps also attack Roxbury, in order to open a communication with the country. In consequence of this apprehension, they strengthened their fortifications with incessant application, adding new bastions to their lines, and furnishing them copiously with artillery, of which they had obtained a fresh supply. The garrison of Boston, which abounded in munitions of war, kept up a continual fire of its artillery, and particularly of its mortars, to impede the works of the Americans. The latter had a certain number of dead and wounded, and several houses were burnt in Roxbury. The works were nevertheless continued with incredible constancy, and the fortifications were carried to the degree of perfection desired, and adequate to serve for a sufficient defence against the assaults of the enemy.



The Bostonians having seen their countrymen driven not only from Breed's Hill, but also from the entire peninsula, and dreading the horrors of a siege, which every thing presaged must be long and rigorous, experienced anew a strong desire to abandon the city, and seek refuge in the interior of the province. Accordingly, the selectmen of the city waited on general Gage, intreating him to deliver the requisite passports; and protesting that, according to the accord previously made, all the citizens had deposited their arms in the Town Hall. But the general, desirous of a pretext for his refusal, issued a proclamation, two days subsequent to the affair of Breed's Hill, declaring, that, by various certain ways, it had come to his knowledge, that great quantities of arms were concealed in the interior of houses, and that the inhabitants meditated hostile designs. This, at least, was what the loyalists reported, who, terrified at the valor and animosity the patriots had manifested in this battle, were apprehensive of some fatal accident, and were unwilling to release their hostages. But the truth is, that the greater part had delivered up their arms, though some had concealed the best and the most precious. However, the English general, who kept his word with nobody, would have others to observe the most scrupulous faith. He refused, therefore, for a long time, all permission to depart. But, finally, the scarcity increasing more and more, and all hope of being able to raise the siege becoming illusory, he found himself constrained to grant passes, in order to disburthen himself of useless mouths. He strenuously still persisted in refusing to permit the inhabitants who retired, to remove their furniture and effects. Thus, when compelled by necessity to consent to that which he had no power to prevent, he annexed to it a rigorous condition, the more inexcusable, as it was altogether without utility, and even could have none but prejudicial results. In this manner, men who renounce all moderation of mind, and abandon themselves to the violence of their irritated passions, often take resolutions, which, far from approaching them to the end proposed, powerfully tend to render its attainment hopeless.

The dearth of provisions to which the garrison of Boston found themselves reduced, caused them to endeavor to procure supplies, by falling suddenly upon the different islands of the environs. Hence, frequent rencounters ensued between the English and the Americans, in which the latter acquired greater courage, and greater experience; while the former became but the more surprised, and the more irritated, at these demonstrations of prowess. The provincials, perfectly conversant with the places, and knowing how to avail themselves of occasions, generally had all the advantage, in these collisions. Sometimes they bore off the stock which remained; sometimes they burnt the forage, or the houses which might serve as a covert for the enemy. In vain did the English appear every where with their numerous marine; the provincials slid themselves sometimes into one

island, and sometimes into another, and cut off the royalists, thus taken by surprise. In like manner upon the coast frequent skirmishes took place; the one party coming for booty, and the other flying to repulse them. This predatory warfare could have no effect to incline the balance more to one side than to the other; it served only to envenom the minds of men, and convert them from partisans, as they were, into viperous and irreconcilable enemies.

While these events were passing within Boston and its environs, the new Congress had convened at Philadelphia, in the month of May. If the first had commenced a difficult work, this had it to continue; and the difficulties were even increased. At the epoch of the former, war was apprehended; now it had commenced; and it was requisite to push it with vigor. Then, as it usually happens in all new enterprises, minds were full of ardor, and tended, by a certain natural proclivity, towards the object; at present, though greatly inflamed by the same sentiments, it was to be feared they might cool, in consequence of those vicissitudes so common in popular movements, always more easy to excite than to maintain. A great number of loyalists, believing that things would not come to the last extremities, and that either the petitions sent to England would dispose the government to condescend to the desires of the Americans, or that, in time, the latter would become tranquil, had hitherto kept themselves quiet; but it was to be feared, that, at present, seeing all hope of reconciliation vanished, and war, no longer probable, but already waged against that king towards whom they wished to remain faithful, they would break out, and join themselves to the royal forces, against the authors of the revolution. It was even to be doubted, lest many of the partisans of liberty, who had placed great hope in the petitions, should falter at the aspect of impending losses and inevitable dangers. All announced that the contest would prove long and sanguinary. It was little to be expected, that a population, until then pacific, and engaged in the arts of agriculture and of commerce, could all at once learn that of war, and devote themselves to it with constancy, and without reserve. It was much more natural to imagine, that, upon the abating of this first fervor, the softer image of their former life recurring to their minds, they would abandon their colors, to go and implore the clemency of the conqueror. It was, therefore, an enterprise of no little difficulty for the Congress to form regulations and take measures, capable of maintaining the zeal of the people, and to impart to its laws the influence which at first had been exercised by public opinion. What obstacles had they not to surmount, in order to reduce a multitude, collected in haste and in tumult, to that state of rigorous discipline, without which it was not permitted to hope for success! Nor was it an easy task to prevent, in the conduct of the war, the revival of those jealousies which had heretofore existed between the different colonies; and which might

serve as a motive, or a pretext, for some of them to consent to an accommodation, and thus desert the common cause. The money requisite to defray the expenses of the war, was almost totally wanting; and there was no prospect of being able to remedy, for the future, the defect of this principal sinew. It was, on the contrary, more rationally to be expected, that the penury of the finances would progressively increase, in consequence of the interruption, or rather total cessation, of commerce, produced by the acts of the British parliament. The want of arms and munitions of war, was no less afflicting; not that there was absolutely no provision of military stores, but it was very far from being adequate to the exigency. And further, it may be considered as a thing very doubtful, whether even the American chiefs sincerely expected to be able, of themselves, to resist the forces of England, and to attain the object of so arduous an enterprise. Nay, it is allowable to believe they placed great dependence upon foreign succours; and these were only to be looked for on the part of the princes of Europe; who, if they beheld with satisfaction the effects of the American disturbances, must at least have detested their causes, and the principles for which the colonies combated. It was no less evident, that these sovereigns would not declare themselves in favor of the Americans, and would not lend them assistance, until the latter should have signalled their arms by some brilliant achievement, of decisive importance for the eventual success of the war. The Americans themselves were perfectly aware, that it would be vain to attempt, at first, to draw the European states into their quarrel; that the first brunt of the war must be borne by themselves alone; and, that, if they proved unfortunate, all hope of foreign aid must be abandoned. The prosperity of the enterprise was therefore precisely so much the less probable, as it was the more necessary; since the means did not exist for providing, in so short a time, the necessary preparations of war. So many obstacles demonstrated the little foundation there was for expecting the support of foreign nations. This consideration was calculated to damp the ardor of the American chiefs, and to introduce a certain vacillation into all their measures. Finally, there was an object of primary interest, which demanded the attention of Congress; that of ascertaining what line of conduct the Indian nations were likely to observe in the present contest. Their neutrality, or their adhesion to this party or to that, was of essential importance to the issue of the whole enterprise. The Americans had reason to fear the influence of the English over these nations; as they are only to be swayed by gifts, and the hope of plunder; and the English, in the control of these means, had greatly the advantage of their adversaries. The Indians, with much greater assurance, could promise themselves pillage in combating for England; since her arms, at this epoch, appeared secure of victory, and since the American territory was to be the theatre of the war. Ca-



nada, also, presented to the English a way of communication with the Indian tribes, who mostly inhabit the banks of the lakes situated behind the colonies, and in front of this English province. It was, besides, of the last importance to those who conducted the affairs of America, to avoid exposing themselves to the least reproach on the part of the people of Great Britain, and even of such of their fellow-citizens as, being either adverse, wavering, or torpid, could not have witnessed the breaking out of hostilities, without a severe shock. Now, though it was little difficult to undertake the justification of the affairs of Lexington and of Breed's Hill, in which the colonists had combated in their own defence against an enemy who assailed them, could the same motives have been alleged in favor of the expeditions upon the frontiers of Canada, directed against the fortresses of Ticonderoga, and of Crown Point, in which the Americans had been the aggressors? Not that these hostilities would stand in need of excuse, with men conversant in affairs of state; for, the war once kindled, it was natural that the Americans should endeavor to do the enemy all the harm in their power, and to preserve himself from his assaults. But the mass of people could not see things in the same light; and still it was essentially the interest of the patriot leaders, to demonstrate, even to evidence, the justice of the cause they defended. All their force consisted in opinion; and arms themselves depended on this; so dissimilar was their situation to that of governments confirmed by the lapse of ages, in which, by virtue of established laws, whether the war be just or not, the regular troops hurry to battle, the people pay the cost; arms, ammunition, provisions, all, in a word, are forthcoming, at the first signal! But the greatest obstacle which the Congress had to surmount, was the jealousy of the provincial assemblies. As all the provinces had joined the league, and taken part in the war, it was requisite that each should concur in the general counsels, which directed the administration; and that all the movements of the body politic should tend towards the same object. Such had been the origin of the American Congress. But this body could not take the government of all parts of the confederacy, without assuming a portion of the authority which belonged to the provincial assemblies; as, for example, that of levying troops, of disciplining the army, of appointing the generals who were to command it in the name of America, and finally, that of imposing taxes, and of creating a paper currency. It was to be feared, if too much authority was preserved to the provincial assemblies, they might administer the affairs of the union with private views, which would have become a source of the most serious inconveniences. On the other hand, it was suspected that these assemblies were extremely unwilling to invest the Congress with the necessary authority, by divesting themselves of a part of their own; and, therefore, that either they would oppose its deliberations, or not exercise in their

execution that exactness and promptitude so desirable to secure the success of military operations.

From this outline of the circumstances under which the Congress assembled, it is seen how difficult was their situation. Others, perhaps, endowed with less force of character, though with equal prudence, would have been daunted by its aspect. But these minds, inspired by the novelty and ardor of their opinions, either did not perceive, or despised, their own dangers and the chances of the public fortune. It is certain, that few enterprises were ever commenced with greater intrepidity ; for few have presented greater uncertainty and peril. But the die was cast ; and the necessity itself in which they were, or believed themselves placed, did not permit them to recede. To prevent accidents, not willing to wait for the times to become their law, they resolved to have recourse, the first moment, to the most prompt and the most efficacious means.

The first thoughts of Congress were necessarily turned towards the army that blockaded Boston, to see that there should be wanting neither arms, nor ammunition, nor reenforcements, nor able and valiant generals. As for those who were then employed, it was to be remarked, that having received their authority from the colonial assemblies, they could not pretend to command the army in the name of the whole Union. If they had all consented to serve under general Putnam, it was on account of his seniority ; and the power he enjoyed, was rather a sort of temporary dictatorship, conferred by the free will of the army, than an office delegated by the general government. The new state of things required a new military system, and the confederate troops ought, necessarily, to have a chief appointed by the government, which represented the entire confederation. The election of a Generalissimo, was an act of supreme importance ; on this alone might depend the good or ill success of the whole series of operations. Among the military men that were then found in America, and had shown themselves not only well disposed, but even ardent for the cause of liberty, those who enjoyed the greatest esteem, were Gates and Lee ; the first, for his experience ; the second, because, to much experience, he joined a very active genius. But the one, and the other, were born in England ; and whatever were their opinions, and the warmth with which they had espoused the cause of America ; whatever even was the confidence the Congress had placed in them, they would have deemed it a temerity to commit themselves to the good faith of two Englishmen, in a circumstance upon which depended the safety of all. In case of misfortune, it would have been impossible to persuade the multitude they had not been guilty of treason, or, at least, of negligence, in the accomplishment of their duties ; suspicions which would have acted in the most fatal manner upon an army whose entire basis reposed on opinion. Besides, Lee was a man of impetuous character, and, perhaps,

rather hated tyranny than loved liberty. These searching and distrustful spirits were apprehensive that such a man, after having released them from the tyranny of England, might attempt, himself, to usurp their liberty. And further, the supreme direction of the war, once committed to the hands of an individual, English born, the latter would be restricted to the alternative, of abandoning the colonies, by a horrible treason, to the absolute power of England, or of conducting them to a state of perfect independence. And the American chiefs, though they detested the first of these conditions, were not willing to deprive themselves of the shelter afforded by a discretion, with regard to the second. It was the same consideration which determined the Congress against appointing one of the generals of the provinces of New England, such as Putnam or Ward, who then commanded the army of the siege, and who had recently demonstrated such signal valor and ability, in all the actions which had taken place in the vicinity of Boston. Both had declared themselves too openly in favor of independence; the Congress desired, indeed, to procure it, but withal, in a propitious time. Nor should it escape mention, that the colonists of Massachusetts were reproached with a too partial patriotism; showing themselves rather the men of their province than Americans. The provinces of the middle and of the south betrayed suspicions; they would have seen with evil eye, the cause of America confided to the hands of an individual who might allow himself to be influenced by certain local prepossessions, at a time in which all desires and all interests ought to be common. There occurred also another reflection, no less just; that the office of Generalissimo ought only to be conferred upon a personage, who, in the value of his estate, should offer a sufficient guaranty of his fidelity, as well in conforming himself to the instructions of Congress, as in abstaining from all violation of private property.

It was too well known that military chiefs, when they are not softened and restrained by the principles of a liberal education, make no scruple to glut their greedy passions, and lay their hands very freely, not only upon the effects of the enemy, but even upon those of their allies and of their own fellow-citizens; a disorder which has always been the scourge, and often the ruin of armies.

Accordingly, after having maturely weighed these various considerations, the Congress proceeded, on the 15th of June, to the election of a Generalissimo, by the way of ballot; the votes, upon scrutiny, were found all in favor of George Washington, one of the representatives of Virginia. The delegates of Massachusetts would have wished to vote for one of theirs; but seeing their votes would be lost, they adhered to the others, and rendered the choice unanimous. Washington was present; he rose, and said; that he returned his most cordial thanks to the Congress, for the honor they had conferred upon him; but that he much doubted his abilities were not



equal to so extensive and important a trust ; that, however, he would not shrink from the task imposed for the service of the country, since, contrary to his expectation, and without regard for the inferiority of his merit, it had placed in him so great confidence ; he prayed only, that in case any unlucky event should happen, unfavorable to his reputation, it might be remembered, that he had declared on that day, with the utmost sincerity, he did not think himself equal to the command he was honored with. He assured the Congress, that as no pecuniary consideration had induced him to abandon his domestic ease and happiness, to enter this arduous career, he did not wish any profit from it ; that pay he would not accept, of any sort.

Colonel Washington, for such was his rank before his election, had acquired the reputation of a brave and prudent commander, in the late wars against the Indians, and against the French ; but at the peace of 1763, he had retired to private life, and no longer exercised the military profession. It is not, therefore, extraordinary, that many should have thought him unable to sustain the burthen of so fierce a war. But, however, the greater part of the nation having full confidence in his talents and his courage, the Americans had no hesitation in raising him to this high dignity. He was not only born in America, but he there had also received his education, and there had made a continual residence. He was modest, reserved, and naturally an enemy to all ambition ; a quality most of all esteemed by this distrustful and jealous people. He enjoyed a considerable fortune, and the general esteem due to his worth and virtue. He was especially considered for his prudence, and a character of singular energy and firmness. It was generally thought, that he did not aim at independence, but merely desired an honorable arrangement with England. This opinion of his, well corresponded with the intentions of the principal representatives, who had no objection to advancing towards independence, but were not yet prepared to discover themselves. They expected to be able so to manage affairs, that one day this great measure would become a necessity, and that Washington himself, when he should have got warm in the career, would easily allow himself to be induced, by the honor of rank, the force of things, or the voice of glory, to proceed with a firm step, even though instead of the revocation of the oppressive laws, the object of his efforts should become total independence. Thus in the person of this general, who was then in his forty-fourth year, and already far from the illusions of youth, were found united all the qualifications wished for by those who had the direction of affairs. Wherefore, it is not surprising that his election gave displeasure to none, and was even extremely agreeable to the greater number.

Having given a chief to the Union, the Congress, to demonstrate how much they promised themselves from his fidelity and virtues, resolved unanimously, that they would adhere to, maintain, and assist

him, with their lives and fortunes, to preserve and uphold American liberty. Then, wishing to place at the head of the army, other experienced officers, who might second Washington, they appointed Artemas Ward, first major-general; Charles Lee, second major-general; and Philip Schuyler, third major-general; Horatio Gates was named adjutant-general. A few days after, they created the eight brigadier-generals following; Seth Pomeroy, William Heath, and John Thomas, of Massachusetts; Richard Montgomery, of New York; David Wooster and Joseph Spencer, of Connecticut; John Sullivan, of New Hampshire; and Nathaniel Greene, of Rhode Island. If any thing demonstrated the excellent discernment of Congress, it was, doubtless, the choice of the first generals; all conducted themselves, in the course of the war, as intrepid soldiers, and faithful guardians of American liberty.

Immediately on being invested with the supreme command, Washington repaired to the camp, at Boston; he was accompanied by general Lee. He was received, wherever he passed, with the greatest honors; the most distinguished inhabitants formed themselves in company to serve him as an escort. The congresses of New York, and of Massachusetts, went to compliment him, and testify the joy his election had given them. He answered them with suavity and modesty; they might be assured that all his thoughts, all his efforts, as well as those of his companions, would be directed towards the reestablishment of an honorable intelligence between the colonies and the parent state; that as to the exercise of the fatal hostilities, in assuming the character of warriors, they had not laid aside that of citizens; and, nothing could afford them a gratification so sincere, as for the moment to arrive, when, the rights of America secured, they should be at liberty to return to a private condition, in the midst of a free, peaceful, and happy country.

The general, having made the review of the army, found, exclusively of an almost useless multitude, only fourteen thousand five hundred men, in a condition for service; and these had to defend a line of more than twelve miles. The new generals arrived at the camp most opportunely; for the discipline of the army, having fallen, as it were into desuetude, it was urgently necessary to introduce a reform. The officers had no emulation; the soldiers scarcely observed the regulations, and neglected all care of cleanliness. And, being mostly drawn from New England, they manifested a refractory spirit, impatient of all subordination.

The generals of Congress, but not without the most painful efforts, succeeded in repairing these disorders. General Gates, who was profoundly versed in all the details of military organisation, contributed more than any other to this salutary work. The soldiers became gradually accustomed to obedience; the regulations were observed; each began to know his duty; and, at length, instead of

a mass of irregular militia, the camp presented the spectacle of a properly disciplined army. It was divided into three corps; the right, under the command of Ward, occupied Roxbury; the left, conducted by Lee, defended Prospect Hill; and the centre, which comprehended a select corps, destined for reserve, was stationed at Cambridge, where Washington himself had established his headquarters. The circumvallation was fortified by so great a number of redoubts, and supplied with so formidable an artillery, that it had become impossible for the besieged to assault Cambridge, and spread themselves in the open country. It was believed, also, that they had lost a great many men, as well upon the field of battle, as in consequence of wounds and disease.

But the American army was near wanting a most essential article; the inventory of powder deposited at Roxbury, Cambridge, and other places of the vicinity, represented a public stock of only ninety barrels. It was known also, that there existed but thirty-six in the magazines of Massachusetts. Though to this quantity had been added all that New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut could furnish, the whole would have fallen short of ten thousand pounds; which allowed but nine charges a man. In this scarcity and danger, the army remained more than fifteen days; and, if the English had attacked during the time, they might easily have forced the lines, and raised the siege. At length, by the exertions of the committee of New Jersey a few tons of powder arrived at the camp, which supplied, for the moment, the necessities of the army, and averted the evils that were feared.

There remained, also, an important part to be organised in the American army; it had, as yet, no special corps of riflemen, which, however, were extremely essential for sudden and desultory operations; for maintaining discipline in the camp; and for protecting the arrival of recruits, of ammunition, and of provisions. It was necessary, withal, to consider, that if the war, as it was probable, after the arrival of reinforcements from England, should be established in the open country, light troops became absolutely indispensable, in such a country as America, broken incessantly by ravines and waters, and obstructed by forests, hedges, mountains, and almost impracticable defiles. Accordingly, the Congress resolved that there should be raised, in Pennsylvania and Virginia, a sufficient number of riflemen; who, the moment the companies should be formed, were to commence their march towards the camp of Boston, where they were destined for the service of light infantry. At the news of the battle of Breed's Hill, the Congress decreed that two companies more should be levied in Pennsylvania, and that they should all be united in a single battalion, to be commanded by such officers as the provincial assembly or Congress might appoint. These companies of riflemen arrived at the camp about the commencement of August;



they formed a corps of not far from fourteen hundred men, light clothed, and armed, for the most part, with rifles of great projectile power.

While the American army that besieged Boston was thus daily reenforced, and furnished with all articles of immediate necessity, the Congress employed themselves with extreme activity in taking such measures as they thought best calculated to keep on foot the troops already assembled; and even to augment and equip them more completely in case of need. Accordingly, it was recommended by a resolution of Congress, that all the colonies should put themselves in a state of defence, and provide themselves with the greatest possible number of men, of arms, and of munitions; and, especially, that they should make diligent search for saltpetre and sulphur, and collect all they could find of these articles, without delay. An exact scrutiny was therefore commenced, in the cellars and in the stables, in pursuit of materials so essential to modern war. In every part, manufactures of gunpowder, and founderies of cannon, were seen rising; every place resounded with the preparations of war. The provincial assemblies and conventions seconded admirably the operations of the Congress; and the people obeyed, with incredible promptitude, the orders of these various authorities.

The Congress, having perceived that zeal for the liberty of America at length prevailed over local partialities, and over the jealousy of power, in the provincial assemblies, took greater courage, and resolved to introduce a general system, which might serve to regulate all the levies that were about making in each province. They were not ignorant of the extreme utility of uniformity, in whatever relates to war, as the means of directing all minds towards the same object, and of preventing dissensions. They passed, therefore, a resolution, by which it was recommended, and their recommendations at this epoch were received and executed as laws, that all men fit to bear arms, in each colony, from sixteen years to fifty, should form themselves into regular companies; that they should furnish themselves with arms, and should exercise in wielding them; that the companies should organise themselves into battalions, upon the footing of habitual defence; and, finally, that a fourth part of the militia, in every colony, should be selected to serve as *minute men*, always ready to march wherever their presence might be necessary. Those who, from their religious opinions, could not bear arms, were invited to come to the succour of their country, at least with all the other means in their power. The military pay was regulated after the rate of twenty dollars a month to captains, thirteen to lieutenants and ensigns, eight to sergeants and corporals, six to mere soldiers. The Congress also recommended, that each province should appoint a committee of safety, to superintend and direct all those things that might concern the public security, during the recess or the assem-

blies or conventions. Also, that they should make such provision as they might judge expedient, by armed vessels or otherwise, for the protection of their coasts and navigation against all insults from enemy ships.

The intentions of Congress were fulfilled, in all parts of the Union, with the utmost cheerfulness; but no where with more ardor than in Pennsylvania, and particularly in the city of Philadelphia. The militia of this city were divided into three battalions of fifteen hundred men each, with an artillery company of one hundred and fifty, and six pieces of cannon. It comprehended, besides, a troop of light horse, and a few companies of light infantry, riflemen, and pioneers. This corps assembled often; and, exhibiting the semblance of battle, manœuvred in the presence of Congress, and of the inhabitants, who thronged to the spectacle from all parts. The dexterity and precision of the movements excited a general surprise and joy. There were, at least, eight thousand men, of these excellent troops, and in their ranks were seen a great number of persons distinguished for their education and condition. The same thing was done in the country towns of Pennsylvania. It appeared that the number of all the men who had taken arms therein, and exercised themselves in handling them, amounted to upwards of sixty thousand. So active, this year, was the zeal of the colonists for their cause, that even a great number of Quakers, however their religious opinions forbid them to take arms, and to shed human blood, and notwithstanding their discipline is all of patience and of submission, allowing themselves to be transported by the general ardor, also joined the companies of the Philadelphians. They said, that although their religion prohibited them from bearing arms in favor of a cause the object of which should be either ambition, cupidity, or revenge, they might, nevertheless, undertake the defence of national rights and liberty. Thus there exist no opinions, however rigorous, but what find evasions—no minds, however pacific, but kindle in great political convulsions.

A spectacle, no less extraordinary, attracted the eyes of all the inhabitants of Philadelphia; whether it was reality, or merely an artifice, with a view of exciting others. The German emigrants who inhabited the city, were almost all very aged, and had seen service in Europe. At the name of liberty, they also were fired; and, what was little to have been expected from their years and decrepitude, formed themselves into a body, which was called the *Old Men's Company*; resuming the profession of arms, which they had already relinquished so long, they resolved to bear a part in the common defence. The oldest of all was elected captain, and his age wanted not much of a century of years. Instead of a cockade in their hats, they wore a black crape, to denote their concern at those unfortunate causes that compelled them, in the decline of life,

to take up arms, in order to defend the liberty of a country which had afforded them a retreat from the oppression which had forced them to abandon their own.

Even the women became desirous to signalise their zeal in defence of country. In the county of Bristol,\* they resolved to raise a regiment, at their own cost ; to equip it entirely, and even to arm such as were unable to afford that expense of themselves. With their own hands they embroidered the colors with mottos appropriate to the circumstances. The gentlewoman who presented them to the regiment, made an eloquent discourse upon public affairs. She earnestly exhorted the soldiers to be faithful, and never to desert the banners of the American ladies.

All these things, though of little importance in themselves, served, however, admirably to inflame the minds, and render them invincibly resolute. The public papers contributed incessantly to the same end, by a multitude of harangues, of examples, and of news. The battles of Lexington and of Breed's Hill, were the subjects upon which the American writers chiefly delighted to exercise their talents. Every circumstance, all the minutest details of these engagements, were accurately described ; and those who had lost life in them, were commemorated with exalted praises. But doctor Warren, especially, was the object of the most touching regrets, of the most unaffected homage. They called him the Hampden of their age ; they proposed him as a model of imitation, to all who, like him, were ready to devote themselves for the public. The eulogium published in the papers of Philadelphia, was particularly pathetic, and calculated to act powerfully upon the minds of the multitude ;

‘What spectacle more noble,’ said the encomium, ‘than this, of a hero who has given his life for the safety of country ! Approach, cruel ministers, and contemplate the fruits of your sanguinary edicts. What reparation can you offer to his children for the loss of such a father, to the king for that of so good a subject, to the country for that of so devoted a citizen ? Send hither your satellites ; come, feast your vindictive rage ; the most implacable enemy to tyrants is no more. We conjure you respect these his honored remains. Have compassion on the fate of a mother overwhelmed with despair and with age. Of him, nothing is left that you can still fear. His eloquence is mute ; his arms are fallen from his hand ; then lay down yours ; what more have you to perpetrate, barbarians that you are ? But, while the name of American liberty shall live, that of Warren will fire our breasts, and animate our arms, against the pest of standing armies.

‘Approach, senators of America ! Come, and deliberate here, upon the interests of the united colonies. Listen to the voice of this

\* Pennsylvania.



illustrious citizen ; he entreats, he exhorts, he implores you not to disturb his present felicity with the doubt that he perhaps has sacrificed his life for a people of slaves.

‘Come hither, ye soldiers, ye champions of American liberty, and contemplate a spectacle which should inflame your generous hearts with even a new motive to glory. Remember, his shade still hovers unexpiated among us. Ten thousand ministerial soldiers would not suffice to compensate his death. Let ancient ties be no restraint ; foes of liberty are no longer the brethren of freemen. Give edge to your arms, and lay them not down till tyranny be expelled from the British empire ; or America, at least, become the real seat of liberty and happiness.

‘Approach ye also, American fathers and American mothers ; come hither, and contemplate the first fruits of tyranny ; behold your friend, the defender of your liberty, the honor, the hope of your country ; see this illustrious hero, pierced with wounds, and bathed in his own blood. But let not your grief, let not your tears be steril. Go, hasten to your homes, and there teach your children to detest the deeds of tyranny ; lay before them the horrid scene you have beheld ; let their hair stand on end ; let their eyes sparkle with fire ; let resentment kindle every feature ; let their lips vent threats and indignation ; then—then—put arms into their hands, send them to battle, and let your last injunction be, to return victorious, or to die, like Warren, in the arms of liberty and of glory !

‘And ye generations of the future, you will often look back to this memorable epoch. You will transfer the names of traitors and of rebels from the faithful people of America, to those who have merited them. Your eyes will penetrate all the iniquity of this scheme of despotism, recently plotted by the British government. You will see good kings misled by perfidious ministers, and virtuous ministers by perfidious kings. You will perceive that if at first the sovereigns of Great Britain shed tears in commanding their subjects to accept atrocious laws, they soon gave themselves up to joy in the midst of murder, expecting to see a whole continent drenched in the blood of freemen. O, save the human race from the last outrages, and render a noble justice to the American colonies. Recall to life the ancient Roman and British eloquence ; and be not niggardly of merited praises towards those who have bequeathed you liberty. It costs us floods of gold and of blood ; it costs us, alas ! the life of Warren.’

The Congress, wishing to uphold this disposition of minds, and to render it, if possible, still more ardent and pertinacious, had recourse to the power of religious opinions over the human affections. At their instigation, the synod of Philadelphia and of New York published a pastoral letter, which was read, to crowded congregations, in all the churches. They affirmed, that unwilling to be the instru-

ments of discord and of war between men and brethren, they had hitherto observed a scrupulous silence ; but things were now come to such a height, that they were resolved to manifest their sentiments ; that they exhorted the people, therefore, to go forth as champions in their country's cause ; and to be persuaded, that in so doing, they would march in the ways of the Master of the kings of the earth, and find, in battle, either victory or inevitable death. The letter concluded with certain moral considerations and precepts, well adapted to stimulate the zeal of these religious minds, and to satisfy them that the cause of America was the cause of God. It was recommended to the soldiers to approve themselves humane and merciful ; and to all classes of citizens, to humble themselves, to fast, to pray, and to implore the divine assistance, in this day of trouble and of peril. The Congress recommended that the 20th of July should be kept as a day of fasting, in all the colonies ; which was religiously observed, but more solemnly at Philadelphia than elsewhere. The Congress attended the divine services in a body ; and discourses adapted to the occasion, were pronounced in the church.

On the same day, as the Congress were about to enter the temple, the most agreeable despatches were received from Georgia. They announced that this province had joined the confederation, and appointed five delegates for its representation in Congress. This news was accepted by all as a happy augury ; and the joy which its importance excited, was heightened in consideration of the moment at which the government and people were apprised of it. The loyalists had long prevailed in this colony ; and thus it had hitherto continued in a state of immobility, and apparent neutrality. But the extremity to which affairs were come, the battles of Lexington and of Breed's Hill, the cruelties, real or supposed, committed by the royal troops, the probabilities of the success of the war in favor of the Americans, the union and concord of the other colonies, and the efficacious movements of the friends of liberty, among whom Dr. Zubly distinguished himself especially, were at length the cause that a provincial convention adhered to all the resolutions of the general Congress, and took several very energetic measures against England ; either as a compensation for their former coldness, or that the patriots, heretofore repressed, were thus animated with greater fury. They declared, that the exception made of Georgia, in the acts of parliament against America, ought rather to be considered as an injury than a favor, since this exemption was only an artifice to separate them from their brethren. They resolved, also, that they would admit no merchandise which should have been shipped in England, after the 1st of July ; and that, dating from the 10th of September, none should be exported from Georgia for England ; and, besides, that all commerce should cease with the English islands

of the West Indies, and with those parts of the American continent which had not accepted the resolutions of Congress. These decisions were of great importance ; Georgia being, though not one of the most considerable provinces, extremely fertile in grain, and principally in rice. It was determined also to abstain from all superfluity, and to banish luxury ; to give encouragement to the farmers who should rear the most numerous flocks. Nor was it forgotten to address a petition to the king, very eloquent, and full of the accustomed protestations of loyalty ; which were lavished, perhaps, the more prodigally, as they were intended no pledges of the reality.

The general Congress cast an anxious eye upon the province of New York, as well because the loyalists abounded there, as because it is naturally much exposed to the attacks of an enemy strong in naval forces. To obviate these dangers, it was ordained, that five thousand infantry should be stationed in the environs of New York ; and, in order to secure the soldiers the succours they might need, in case of wounds and sickness, that a hospital should be established, with accommodations for the invalids of an army of twenty thousand men. It was placed under the direction of Dr. Benjamin Church, principal physician of the army.

Considering, also, of how great importance was the prompt transmission of letters, and desirous that the service of the post should be confided to zealous and faithful men, the Congress appointed Dr. Benjamin Franklin director-general of this establishment. He had filled the same office in England, for the letters of America ; and had lost it, for having shown too much attachment to the privileges of the colonies. Regular mails were established upon the route from Falmouth, in New England, to the city of Savannah, in Georgia.

But, as the Congress could not forget that the principal sinew of war is money, they soon turned their attention to this object, no less important than men and arms themselves, especially in a defensive war, as, from the very nature of things, this, which had broken out in America, was to be. In offensive wars, where the enemy is assailed in his own country, by ravaging his territory, men and arms can obtain money with victory ; whereas, in a war of defence, it is money that must procure men and arms. In the present circumstances, however, it could not be obtained, but with the greatest difficulties ; since the only resources were loans or taxes. Both presented not only many obstacles, but almost an absolute impossibility. For several years, the misunderstanding which had arisen with England had greatly diminished the quantity of specie that circulated in the colonies. The provinces of New England had always been rather sparingly supplied with it ; and the prohibitory acts of parliament, of the last ten years, had excessively attenuated this slender mass. In the southern provinces, though, from the fertility of their lands, the most opulent, this scarcity of coin was still



increased, not only by the above mentioned causes, but also by a numerous importation of negroes, which had taken place within the few last years. To draw money from these provinces, by way of loans or taxes, would have been an imprudent and dangerous operation, or rather a thing impracticable, at least in the quantity exacted by the wants of the state. It should be added, as to loans, that whether the rich should furnish their money or not, they could always, however, lend their credit; and the employment of the second means offered more advantages than the first; for, if the wealthy could aid the state with their funds and their credit at the same time, men of moderate or narrow fortune had not the same faculty; thus partial loans of money could not have been effected; while, on the contrary, a partial loan of credit might be used, which, though made collectively, in the name of all, would in fact be supported partially, in general opinion, by the powerful means of the rich. In respect to taxes, this way offered only inconveniences; the people of the colonies being little accustomed to assessments, this sudden stroke at their property, in the outset, would infallibly have produced the most pernicious effects. The people inflamed for a common cause more willingly make the sacrifice of their existence than of their property; because to the first of these sacrifices is annexed a glory which is foreign to the other, and that honor is more frequently found among the brave than among the rich. Hence the Congress found themselves placed, with respect to this business, in a situation of singular difficulty. This will easily be conceived, when it is considered that they could indeed recommend, but not command; and that the obedience of the people was more voluntary than constrained. It was much to be feared they would refuse it, if it were attempted to subject them to contributions.

It was also greatly to be apprehended, that the provincial assemblies, extremely jealous of the right of establishing public burthens, would consent with repugnance, if not absolutely refuse, that the Congress should assume the power of taxation. How, besides, could the latter hope to assess the tax in a just proportion, with respect to each colony, when their means, founded, in great part, upon commerce, and consequently subject to all the variations resulting from the disturbances, could not be appreciated upon any certain principle? It would have been necessary to undertake this operation, without basis, and without rule; and even the semblance of partiality, however imaginary, would have sufficed to excite general clamors, and the most prejudicial dissensions.

Such were the shoals the Congress had to encounter, in their efforts to obtain the money necessary to the wants of the state and of war. They resolved, therefore, to avoid them, in resorting to loans of credit, by an emission of bills which should have for guaranty the faith of the united colonies. It was hoped that the abun-

dance of provisions, the ardor and unanimity of the people, and particularly of the rich, for the most part favorable to the new order of things, would support the public credit, and prevent a depreciation of the bills. It seems, however, that what had happened in the northern provinces, where the paper money had fallen very seriously, should have served as an example and a warning. Besides, prudent men plainly foresaw that the facility of the thing, and the always increasing multiplicity of wants, would lead to the emission of so great a quantity of this paper, that even its superabundance must deprive it of much of its value. Indeed, could this have been doubted, considering the Congress would not have an exclusive authority to emit bills of credit, and that the provincial assemblies might as freely exercise the same right? The cause of the evil was too evident for the most prejudicial consequences not to have been anticipated. It was also to be considered, that the chances of war, always uncertain, might prove favorable to the English, and open them a passage into the interior of the provinces; the inevitable result of which would be, the total ruin of credit, and the annihilation of the bills. It is known by experience, that in similar cases, the distrust of the people admits of no remedy. Such were the motives of hesitation and of fear, which perplexed the minds of the thoughtful, relative to the emission of bills of credit. But there was no room for option; and the Congress found themselves reduced to an extremity so imperious, that any resource became desirable. Accordingly, they had no scruple in adopting the present, which, if not good, was at least necessary. They decreed, in the month of June, that the sum of two millions of Spanish dollars should be issued, in bills of credit; and that the faith of the united colonies should be the guaranty of their redemption. Some time after, they made another emission of bills, to the value of one million of dollars, in bills of thirty dollars each. They were received, in this first ardor, with universal promptitude.

Having provided men, arms, and money, the Congress took into consideration the means of gaining the Indian nations, respecting whose dispositions they were not without a certain anxiety. It was known that general Gage had despatched from Boston one of his emissaries, named John Stuart, to the nation of the Cherokees, who inhabit the countries bordering upon South Carolina; and that general Carleton, governor of Canada, had sent colonel Johnson to the Indians of St. Francis, and others belonging to the Six Tribes, that were nearer to this province. Their object was, to induce these nations with promises, with money, and with presents, to take arms against the colonies; an expedient which could barely have been tolerated, if every other hope had been lost, and England had been reduced to the necessity either of employing the Indians, or of receiving conditions from the Americans. But how is it possible not

to condemn it, not to view it with abhorrence, when other soldiers, and other arms, offered themselves from all parts in abundance, to prosecute the war successfully against the colonies? Posterity cannot fail to execrate the counsels of those who, without the least necessity, were capable of preferring the barbarous Indians to the disciplined troops of England. This act of detestable ferocity, moreover, turned at length to the confusion of its own authors; but the mind of man is blind, his character often cruel, and civil fury implacable. The Congress, consequently, thought of opposing, by the most efficacious means, these English attempts. In order to proceed with more method, they made an ideal division of the Indian tribes into as many districts as there were tribes, and stationed with each an agent, who, knowing the language, customs, and country of these savages, should observe their motions, satisfy their reasonable desires, and provide for their wants; in a word, these emissaries were to neglect no means of conciliating the benevolence of the Indians, in order that they might give no aid to the royal arms, and observe a strict neutrality. It has been attempted to insinuate, on the contrary, that the Congress had instructed its agents to use all their endeavors to engage the Indians on the American side. But this accusation appears to want probability; for it was evident that the war was to be carried on upon the American territory, and it was well known that the Indians plunder and massacre friends as well as enemies. Besides, it is not to be supposed that the Americans could have had the design to sully with a stain of barbarity, in the very outset, a cause which they wished might be reputed by the universe both just and holy.

We will not, however, omit to relate, that in Philadelphia it was believed, and was announced as a happy event, that the Mohawk Indians, having sent the belt to those of Stockbridge, which, with these nations, was the token of alliance, were ready to march with the colonists against the English. It was in like manner published in Massachusetts, that the Senecas, another Indian nation, were prepared to take arms in favor of America. In addition to this, an Indian chief, named *Swashan*, accompanied by four other chiefs of the tribe of St. Francis, was conducted, in the month of August, to the camp at Cambridge, by a certain Reuben Colburn. They came to offer themselves as ready to undertake the defence of American liberty; they were well received, and pay was assigned them. *Swashan* boasted that he would, if required, produce a good band of his people. He added, that the Indians of Canada, and the French themselves, were disposed in favor of the Americans, and were ready to join them. These reports were circulated, and generally believed. But, whatever were the wishes of the people, the Congress desired merely to maintain the savages in neutrality. This moderation did not prevent the English from availing themselves of



these first demonstrations; affirming, that they had employed the Indians in their army, because the Americans had first endeavored to gain them for auxiliaries.

The Congress having arranged the business of the Indians, which had caused them great perplexity, and imboldened by the affairs of Lexington and Breed's Hill, they resolved to manifest the dignity of their cause, and justify their appeal to arms, in the sight of all the nations of the world; in doing which, they employed the style of independent nations. They published a declaration, wherein they recited, in a strain of singular energy, the toils, the hardships, the perils, which had been the portion of the first colonists, when they went to seek refuge in these foreign and distant regions; their cares to promote the increase and prosperity of their establishments; their compacts made with the crown; the advantages and wealth which England had derived from them. After having mentioned the long fidelity and uniform promptitude of the Americans, in coming to the succour of the mother country, they proceeded to speak of the new measures taken by the ministers upon the conclusion of the last war; and made an exact enumeration of the laws which had been the subject of complaints, so often, and always so fruitlessly, repeated. They glanced at the iniquitous conditions of accommodation proposed in parliament by lord North, insidiously calculated to divide them, to establish an auction of taxations, where colony should bid against colony, all uninformed what ransom would redeem their lives. They described the hostile occupation of the city of Boston, by the troops under the command of general Gage; the hostilities of Lexington, commenced by the royal soldiers, and the cruelties committed in this expedition; the violation of faith on the part of this general, in the refusal of permissions to pass out, and by permissions more cruel than refusal, in having, with barbarous inhumanity, separated wives from their husbands, children from their parents, the aged and sick from their relations and friends, who wished to attend and comfort them; the proprietors from their furniture and most valuable effects. They related the butchery of Breed's Hill, the burning of Charlestown, the seizure of their vessels, the ravage of provisions, and the menaced ruin and destruction of all things. The attempts of the governor of Canada to excite the ferocious savages of that province against the colonists, were not omitted; and they accused the ministers of a determination to inflict upon an innocent and unhappy country, the complicated calamities of fire, sword, and famine;

'We are reduced,' they exclaimed, 'to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers, or resistance by force. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery. Honor, justice, and humanity, forbid us tamely to surrender that freedom which we received from our gallant ancestors, and which our innocent posterity

have a right to receive from us. We cannot endure the infamy of resigning succeeding generations to that wretchedness which inevitably awaits them, if we basely entail hereditary bondage upon them. Our cause is just. Our union is perfect. Our resources are great; and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attainable. We gratefully acknowledge, as signal instances of the divine favor towards us, that his providence would not permit us to be called into this severe controversy, until we were grown up to our present strength, had been previously exercised in warlike operations, and possessed of the means of defending ourselves. With hearts fortified with these animating reflections, we most solemnly, before God and the world, declare, that, exerting the utmost energy of those powers which our beneficent Creator hath graciously bestowed upon us, the arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, we will, in defiance of every hazard, with unabating firmness and perseverance, employ for the preservation of our liberties; being, with one mind, resolved to die freemen rather than to live slaves. Lest this declaration should disquiet the minds of our friends and fellow subjects in any part of the empire, we assure them that we mean not to dissolve that union which has so long and so happily subsisted between us, and which we sincerely wish to see restored. Necessity has not yet driven us into that desperate measure, or induced us to excite any other nation to war against them. We have not raised armies, with ambitious designs of separating from Great Britain, and establishing independent states. We fight not for glory or for conquest. We exhibit to mankind the remarkable spectacle of a people attacked by unprovoked enemies, without any imputation or even suspicion of offence. *They* boast of their privileges and civilisation, and yet proffer no milder conditions, than servitude or death.

‘In our native land, in defence of the freedom that is our birth-right, and which we ever enjoyed till the late violation of it,—for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the honest industry of our forefathers and ourselves, against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms. We shall lay them down, when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all danger of their being renewed shall be removed,—and not before.

‘With an humble confidence in the mercies of the supreme and impartial Judge and Ruler of the universe, we most devoutly implore his divine goodness to protect us happily through this great conflict, to dispose our adversaries to reconciliation on reasonable terms, and thereby to relieve the empire from the calamities of civil war.’

This manifesto, which was generally received with great eulogium, was subscribed by John Hancock, who had been elected president of Congress in place of Rutledge, and countersigned by the secretary, Charles Thomson.

The Congress, in this occurrence also, omitted not to employ the means of religion. The declaration was sent into every part of the continent, and read from the pulpits by the ministers of religion, with suitable exhortations. In the camp of Boston it was read with particular solemnity. Major-general Putnam assembled his division upon the heights of Prospect Hill, to hear it. It was followed by a prayer analogous to the occasion; the general having given the signal, all the troops cried three times, *Amen*; and, at the same instant, the artillery of the fort fired a general salute; the colors, recently sent to general Putnam, were seen waving, with the usual motto, '*An appeal to Heaven*;' and this other, '*Qui transulit sustinet*.' The same ceremony was observed in the other divisions. The joy and enthusiasm were universal. At Cambridge, the manifesto was read in the presence of the most distinguished citizens of Massachusetts, and of an immense multitude that were assembled upon this occasion. There resulted from it, in all minds, no little increase of constancy, fortified by religious zeal. All this was done in imitation of what had been practised by the patriots in the times of Charles I. It seemed as if this same war was renewed, in which the Protestant religion served as a motive or a pretext to the defenders of liberty, or to the promoters of anarchy; and the Catholic religion, as a title, or a veil, to the partisans of limited monarchy, or to the supporters of despotism—so powerful is the voice of religion over human hearts! And such has always been the propensity of those who govern nations, to profit by it! Hence religion itself sustains an incalculable injury; hence that coldness towards it, which, to the regret of prudent men, has been observed at certain periods. The generality of people have discovered that politic men make use of religion as an instrument to arrive at their worldly ends. Man, being naturally a foe to restraint, and inordinate in his desires, instead of restricting himself within the limits of good, is too often precipitated into its contrary. Thus religion, which should always be holy and spotless, too often has favored culpable enterprises, to the great scandal of the people, and manifest diminution of its own authority, and of good habits. Be this as it may, it is quite certain, that if the semblance of religion, with which the Americans endeavored to color their enterprise, produced greater unanimity and ardor among themselves, it engendered also more obstinacy and rigor on the part of the English government, in the conduct of the war. In their contemplation, state policy was coupled with the remembrance of the obstacles which the ancient British monarchs were forced to contend with; which, mingled with a certain terror, excited them to greater bitterness and fury.

The Congress having thus attempted to justify their conduct before the tribunal of the world, they employed their thoughts in protesting to the English people, that the intention of the Americans was to maintain those ancient relations which had been, and still were their



glory, their happiness, and the first of their desires. They admonished them, in a grave and pathetic style, to remember the ancient friendships, the glorious and common achievements of their ancestors, and the affection towards the heirs of their virtues, which had hitherto preserved their mutual connexion. 'But when,' they added, 'that friendship is violated by the grossest injuries; when the pride of ancestry becomes our reproach, and we are no otherwise allied than as tyrants and slaves; when reduced to the melancholy alternative of renouncing your favor or our freedom; our choice cannot be doubtful.' After some lines upon their merits towards the mother country, and expatiating upon the pernicious laws, they concluded, by saying, that victory would prove equally fatal to England and to America; that soldiers who had sheathed their swords in the bowels of the Americans, would have as little reluctance to draw them against Britons; that they entreated heaven to avert from their friends, brethren and countrymen, for by these names they would still address them, before the remembrance of former kindness was obliterated, the destruction and ruin that threatened them.

They also drew up an address to the king, which commenced with a recital of the services rendered by the colonists, of their fidelity towards the crown, and of the calamities that now oppressed them. They supplicated his majesty, that he would deign to interpose his authority, to procure them relief from their present condition; that he would be pleased to direct some mode, by which the united applications of the colonists to the throne, might be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation. They implored also, that arms, in the meantime, might cease; and that such statutes as more immediately distressed them, might be repealed; affirming, that, having done them this justice, the king would receive such proofs of the good disposition of the colonists, as would soon restore them to his royal favor; whilst, on their part, they should neglect nothing to testify their devotion to their sovereign, and affection towards the parent state.

The Congress had motives for wishing to render the Irish nation favorable to their cause; a great number of useful citizens annually emigrated from Ireland to America; and thus, among the soldiers, and even among the American generals, were found some Irish. They were apprehensive that the people of Ireland might receive impressions unfavorable to the colonists, in consequence of the associations against commerce, which were seriously prejudicial to that country. They were not ignorant, besides, that the Irish were, for many reasons, dissatisfied with the English government, and that, notwithstanding the concessions which had recently been made them, no little animosity still rankled in their minds. The Congress purposed to avail themselves of this misunderstanding, and to irritate the wounds already festering in the breast of the Irish. It would be

difficult to prove this conduct strictly consistent with loyalty. But the war was now commenced, and the Americans were disposed to use all means to carry it on with advantage; and none are more sanctioned by usage, than those of feigning to desire peace, and of exciting and exasperating the minds of the enemy's subjects, against lawful authority. To this intent, the Congress addressed a very eloquent letter to the Irish people. 'They were desirous,' they affirmed, 'as injured and innocent, of possessing the good opinion of the virtuous and humane; however incredible it might appear, that, in so enlightened a period, the leaders of a nation, which in every age had sacrificed hecatombs of her bravest patriots on the altar of liberty, should attempt to establish an arbitrary sway over the lives, liberties, and property of their fellow subjects in America; it was, nevertheless, a most deplorable and indisputable truth.' The battles of Lexington and Breed's Hill, the burning of Charlestown, and the imprisonments of Boston, were mentioned in suitable terms. 'Who can blame us,' they added, 'for endeavoring to restrain the progress of so much desolation? for repelling the attacks of such a barbarous band? We have no doubt, with the divine assistance, of rising superior to the usurpations of evil and abandoned ministers. We already anticipate the golden period, when liberty, with all the gentle arts of peace and humanity, shall establish her mild dominion in this western world, and erect eternal monuments to the memory of those virtuous patriots and martyrs, who shall have fought, and bled, and suffered, in her cause.

'Accept our most grateful acknowledgments for the friendly disposition you have always shown towards us. We know that you are not without your grievances. We sympathise with you in your distress, and are pleased to find, that the design of subjugating us, has persuaded administration to dispense to Ireland some vagrant rays of ministerial sunshine. Even the tender mercies of government have long been cruel towards you. In the rich pastures of Ireland, many hungry parricides have fed and grown strong, to labor in its destruction. We hope the patient abiding of the meek may not always be forgotten; and God grant that the iniquitous schemes of extirpating liberty from the British empire may be soon defeated. We have taken up arms to defend it; and with it, our property, our honor, our existence; all, in a word, that is dearest to man upon earth. For the success of our efforts, we confide in the good offices of our fellow subjects beyond the Atlantic, aware as they must be, that they have no other favor to expect from the same common enemy, than that of being last devoured.'

With the same view, the Congress wrote a letter to the city of London, to return thanks for the part it had taken in favor of America; a conduct, they said, which well became the first city in the world, that, in all ages, had approved itself the defender of liberty and just government, against lawless tyranny and oppression.

In the midst of these cares, the Congress had not forgotten how important it was to the success of their enterprises, to conciliate the friendship of the Canadians, in order that they might either make common cause with the Americans, or, at least, stand neutral. They knew that the first letter had not been without effect, and they resolved to confirm it with a second. The situation of affairs was favorable to their hopes; the act of Quebec had, in this province, produced effects altogether contrary to those its authors had anticipated. The greater part of the inhabitants had received it with evident marks of displeasure, and, by all except the nobles, it was considered tyrannical, and tending to oppression. And although it could not be expected that the Canadians, long accustomed, under the French, to a more rigid rein, should be as much inclined to resistance as the English colonists, habituated to live under the laws of a milder government, yet there was ground to hope, that from aversion to the English domination, they might be induced to take part in the quarrel, and unite their arms to those of their neighbors. It was known, however, that a part of the Canadians, and especially those of Montreal, and other places nearer to the colonies, had manifested great displeasure at the occupation by the colonists of Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and the lakes which lead from the colonies to Canada. The Congress wished to dissipate entirely these suspicions and jealousies; but, what was more worthy of their consideration, is, that they had positive intelligence of the exertions which the English governor was continually making, to dispose the Canadians to take arms, and march under the British banners. The agents of the king spared neither gold nor promises, to attain their object. General Carleton, who was then governor, though of a character naturally severe, derived great facility in this point from the extensive influence he enjoyed with the inhabitants, and the reputation he had deservedly acquired, of a good chieftain, a humane man, and an upright citizen. It was known, that he was arrived in the province with very ample powers. He could appoint or dismiss, at will, all the members of the council; compel as many Canadian subjects as he should see fit, to march against whatever enemy he might deem it expedient to combat; construct forts and dismantle them; in a word, take all the measures he might think necessary for the security of the province. He was, besides, not a man to hesitate how to exercise the authority which had been confided to him. He had already made use of it, in proclaiming that the Canadians who should present themselves, should be received as volunteers, into the king's pay, and formed into a regiment. The Americans had learned, besides, that the government had resolved to expedite, for Canada, fifteen thousand muskets, in order to arm the Roman Catholics of that country. All announced, that it was intended to assemble a strong force, with a view of attacking the colonies in the rear, and of cooperating with general Gage. Lord North him-



self, in his discourse to parliament, had intimated that such was the design of the government. The moment was critical ; and, without a prompt remedy, it was to be feared the Canadians would take their resolution to act against the colonies. The Congress, therefore, decided to address them a letter, entitling it, ‘ *To the oppressed Inhabitants of Canada.*’ It was strong in thoughts, expressed in a style as elegant as it was spirited. They reminded the Canadians, that, by their late address, they had already apprised them of the designs in agitation to extirpate the rights and liberties of all America ; they had now to condole with them most sincerely, that these schemes were about to be carried into execution ; or rather, that, by the new form of government given to the province of Canada, were already introduced ; that thus its inhabitants, their wives, and their children, were made slaves ; that thus they had nothing they could any longer call their own ; that all the fruits of their labor and industry might be taken from them, whenever an avaricious governor and a rapacious council might incline to demand them ; that they were liable to be transported into foreign countries, to fight battles in which they had no interest ; that the enjoyment of their very religion depended on a legislature in which they had no share ; that their priests were exposed to expulsion, banishment, and ruin, whenever their wealth and possessions should furnish sufficient temptations ; that they could not be sure that a virtuous prince would always fill the throne ; and, should a wicked or a careless king concur with a wicked ministry, in extracting the treasure and strength of their country, it was impossible to conceive to what variety, and to what extremes of wretchedness they might, under the present establishment, be reduced ; that the Americans knew full well that every exertion was made, that every artifice was employed, to arm their brethren of Canada against them ; but should they, by complying in this instance, assent to their new establishment, and a war break out with France, let them recollect, their wealth and their sons might be sent to perish in expeditions against the French Islands in the West Indies ; that as to the colonists, they were determined to live free or not at all ; that they were the friends, and not the enemies, of the Canadians ; that the taking of the fortresses and armed vessels on the lake, was dictated by necessity ; but that they might place full trust in the assurance that the colonies would pursue no measures whatever, but such as friendship, and a regard for the mutual interests of the two people, might suggest ; and, finally, that they still hoped the Canadians would unite with the colonists in defence of their common liberty.

This address had the effect its authors desired, at least in that it produced the neutrality of the Canadians. In answer to the instances of the governor, they said, that without regret they found themselves under the English government, and that they should always deport themselves peaceably and loyally ; but that being entirely strangers

to the controversy arisen between the government and the colonies, it was not for them to undertake to be the judges of it ; that consequently it would in no shape become them to take any part in the quarrel ; that if the government thought proper to arm the militia of the province, in order to defend it in case of attack, they should give it their cordial assent ; but that to march beyond the frontiers, and attack the neighboring people, they could not consent. These favorable dispositions of the Canadians were a guaranty to the Congress of their security on the part of the north.

General Carleton, finding the Canadians so decided in their opposition, had recourse to the authority of religion. He therefore solicited Brand, the bishop of Quebec, to publish a mandament, to be read from the pulpit, by the curates, in time of divine service. He desired the prelate should exhort the people to take arms, and second the soldiers of the king, in their enterprises against the colonies. But the bishop, by a memorable example of piety and religious moderation, refused to lend his ministry in this work ; saying, that such conduct would be too unworthy of the character of the pastor, and too contrary to the canons of the Roman church. However, as in all professions there are individuals who prefer their interest to their duty, and the useful to the honest, a few ecclesiastics employed themselves with great zeal in this affair ; but all their efforts were vain ; the Canadians persisted in their principles of neutrality. The nobility, so well treated in the act of Quebec, felt obligated in gratitude to promote in this occurrence the views of the government, and very strenuously exerted themselves with that intention, but without any better success. The exhortations of Congress did not contribute alone to confirm the inhabitants in these sentiments ; they flattered themselves, also, that their pacific conduct in so urgent a crisis, and when their junction with the colonies might have been so prejudicial to the interests of England, would determine the government to exercise greater mildness towards them, and grant them favors which otherwise they could have had no expectation of obtaining.

General Carleton, perceiving that he could make no calculation upon being able to form Canadian regiments, and knowing, withal, that there existed in the province certain loyalists, who would have no repugnance to taking arms, and other individuals whom interest might easily induce to enlist as volunteers, resolved to employ a new expedient. He caused the drums to beat up, in Quebec, in order to excite the people to enrol themselves in a corps to which he gave the name of the *Royal Highland Emigrants*. He offered the most favorable conditions. The term of service was limited to the continuance of the disturbances ; each soldier was to receive two hundred acres of land, in any province of North America he might choose ; the king paid himself the customary duties upon the acquisition of lands ; for twenty years, the new proprietors were to be

exempted from all contribution for the benefit of the crown ; every married soldier obtained other fifty acres, in consideration of his wife, and fifty more for account of each of his children, with the same privileges and exemptions, besides the bounty of a guinea at the time of enlistment. In this manner, Carleton succeeded in gleaning up some few soldiers ; but he was reduced to attach much more importance to the movements of the Indians. The governor, and the agents of the king with these savage nations, had pushed their negotiations with so much zeal, that they had at length accomplished a part of their wishes ; having persuaded some of them to take arms in favor of the English party, notwithstanding they had so many times sworn to observe an absolute neutrality ; but savage nations are not more scrupulous in keeping faith than the civilised ; and gold, the love of rapine, and thirst of blood, are with them omnipotent. Towards the last of July, arrived, however, in Montreal, colonel Guy Johnson, intendant-general of the king for Indian affairs, accompanied by a great number of chiefs and warriors of the Six Tribes. A solemn assembly was formed, where they appeared as the chiefs and warriors of the confederate Indians ; their troop was considerable. They swore, according to their custom, and in the presence of general Carleton, to support the cause of the king. Such was the first origin of the Indian war. These were the barbarians, who, having joined the troops of general Burgoyne, exercised, two years after, such ravages, and perpetrated such cruelties, as we shall be constrained to relate, in the sequel of this history.

Meanwhile, the Congress could not overlook in silence the act of conciliation of lord North, without manifesting too great an inflexibility, and avowing that the Americans would listen to no accommodation. They, nevertheless, were not disposed to take a precipitate resolution on this point, and reflected upon it for the space of full two months. By this delay, they intended to show either a great maturity of judgment, or perhaps their indifference towards the act. But what appears more certain, is that the war being commenced, they desired to wait the event of the first actions. The answer could not, in effect, be the same, if victory had crowned their efforts, as in case fortune had favored the English arms. When the conciliatory act arrived in America, the 30th of May, it is true the affair of Lexington had taken place, and the Americans had acquired in it a reputation for incontestable courage ; but it was no more, in fact, than a warm brush between militia collected in haste, and a detachment of regular troops ; not a set battle, from which any prognostic could be drawn relative to the final issue of the war. The Congress saw perfectly well, that it would always be time to enter into a negotiation of arrangement ; and, in case of any disastrous event, they wished to reserve a way open to accept the conditions which England herself had offered. Victory would become of no utility to the



Americans, if they had commenced by submitting to the terms proposed; and ill fortune would have made the conditions of accord no worse. No risk, therefore, was incurred by temporising; and there might result from it great advantages. But the battle of Breed's Hill entirely changed the state of things. The ardor with which the Americans pressed the siege of Boston, their activity in procuring themselves arms and ammunition, the constancy and even alacrity they discovered in supporting the hardships of war, and evils produced by the late acts of parliament, rendered their situation much less desperate. If the event might still appear dubious to indifferent men, minds strongly excited must have conceived more hope than fear. Accordingly, the members of Congress, encouraged by the favorable aspect of affairs, delayed their answer under pretext of dignity. But at length they proceeded to the examination of the conditions of accord, with a full determination to reject them. This resolution, however, was not without inconvenience; for, at the very moment they refused all arrangement, they wished to retain the appearance of a desire for the return of concord. It was requisite to color this refusal, and to demonstrate to the eyes of the world, that they rejected not all conditions, but only such as were offered them. They declared themselves of opinion, that the colonies of America were entitled to the sole and exclusive privilege of giving and granting their own money; that this involved the right of deliberating whether they would make any gift, for what purposes it should be made, and what should be its amount; which privileges were taken from the colonists altogether, by the resolution of lord North; that, as the colonies possessed a right of appropriating their own gifts, so were they entitled to inquire into their application, to see that they were not wasted among the venal and corrupt, for the purpose of undermining the civil rights of the givers, nor diverted to the support of standing armies, inconsistent with their freedom, and subversive of their quiet; which right was violated by the resolution in question, since it placed the money voted at the disposal of parliament; that this proposition was unreasonable, because it could not be known what sum the parliament would exact; and insidious, because the parliament itself might accept the trivial grants of one colony, and refuse the considerable offers of another, thus maintaining a good intelligence with some, and reducing the others to a state of enmity, in order to compel their compliance with harder conditions, and by the division of the colonies, thus prepare, at its pleasure, the slavery of all; that the suspension of the right of taxing the colonies, being expressly made commensurate with the continuance of the gifts, these, at the will of parliament, might become perpetual; a thing that would aim a fatal blow at public liberty; that the parliament itself was in the established practice of granting their supplies from year to year only; that even upon the supposition that the proffered

terms had been as fair and reasonable as they were unjust and insidious, the din of arms resounding from all parts, the armies, the fleets that infested and surrounded America, were alone sufficient to render them odious and inadmissible ; that they thought the attempt unnecessary to draw from their hands by force their proportional contributions to the common defence, since they had always contributed freely ; that they only were competent judges of the measures proper to be taken in regard to this point, and that they did not mean the people of America should be burthened to furnish sinecures for the idle or the wicked, under color of providing for a civil list ; that while the parliament pursued its plan of civil government within the limits of its own jurisdiction, they hoped also to pursue theirs without molestation ; that the proposition was altogether unsatisfactory, because it imported only the suspension, and not a renunciation, of the pretended right of taxation, and because it did not propose to repeal the odious acts of parliament ; that the minister wished to have it believed there was nothing in dispute but the mode of levying taxes, whereas, in truth, their adversaries still claimed the right of demanding arbitrarily, and of taxing the colonies for the full amount of their demand, if not complied with ; that the English government even claimed a right to alter their charters and fundamental laws ;

‘ But, when the world reflects,’ they added, ‘ how inadequate to justice are these vaunted terms ; when it attends to the rapid and bold succession of injuries, which, during a course of eleven years, have been aimed at these colonies ; when it reviews the pacific and respectful expostulations, which, during that whole time, were the sole arms we opposed to them ; when it observes that our complaints were either not heard at all, or were answered with new and accumulated injuries ; when it recollects that the minister himself, on an early occasion, declared, that ‘ he would never treat with America till he had brought her to his feet,’ and that an avowed partisan of ministry has more lately denounced against us, the dreadful sentence, ‘ *delenda est Carthago*,’ that this was done in presence of a British senate, and, being unreprieved by them, must be taken to be their own sentiment ; when it considers the great armaments with which they have invaded us, and the circumstances of cruelty with which they have commenced and prosecuted hostilities ; when these things, we say, are laid together, and attentively considered, can the world be deceived into an opinion that we are unreasonable ? or can it hesitate to believe, with us, that nothing but our own exertions may defeat the ministerial sentence of death, or abject submission ?’

Such were the conclusions of the Congress, relative to the resolution of adjustment of lord North ; they caused them to be published, and distributed in all places. No one can observe the acrimonious style, and the new pretensions of the Americans, without perceiving

how little they were inclined to concord. Wishing, however, to remove the prejudice resulting to their cause, from the opinion, which began to be general, that they already aimed at independence, they resolved to clear themselves of the blame of not having deigned from the commencement of the controversy, to bring forward any conciliatory proposition; and intending, perhaps, to reserve a free access with the conqueror, in case of disaster, or perhaps also to preclude the propositions of lord North, which they were determined not to accept, the Congress had it in contemplation to offer the following conditions; the colonies should not only continue to grant extraordinary subsidies in time of war, but, besides, if allowed a free commerce, they were to pay into the sinking fund, such sum annually, for the space of an hundred years, as at that period would, if faithfully appropriated, suffice to extinguish the present debt of Great Britain. In case this condition was not accepted, they proposed to stipulate with Great Britain, a compact, by virtue of which, that kingdom should be authorised, for the same term of an hundred years, to make such laws as it might judge necessary, to regulate commerce, and direct it towards the general utility of the empire; but in such case, no other pecuniary contribution could be required of them. This proposition, as is seen, implied no new concession; since, on the contrary, this was precisely the subject in controversy. Some believed, also, that they would have proposed that the parliament should impose a general tax upon all the empire, meaning, upon England, Scotland, and the American colonies, of which tax each of these countries should bear its proportion, according to its faculties. They imagined that this mode of imposition would render the parliament extremely circumspect upon this point, since it could no longer charge America, without charging England at the same time, and in the same proportion. But the action of Breed's Hill, the rigorous siege of Boston, the ardor of the people, and perhaps the hope, already more probable, of foreign succours, so wrought, that these propositions were soon consigned to oblivion, and the whole mind was given to thoughts of war.

Hitherto the Congress had made all the dispositions which related either to the support of the war, to the negotiations of alliance with the neighboring nations, or to the justification of their cause with the inhabitants of Great Britain and of Ireland; they now applied themselves to the business of establishing the bases of their authority; of ascertaining how far its limits ought to extend; and what were its relations with the authority of the provincial assemblies. This fixation of powers was, with good reason, considered as an operation of the first necessity. For, until then, the transactions of the Congress were supported rather upon the opinion of the people, than upon statutes approved by them, or by the assemblies of their representatives. They were obeyed, because such was the general inclination,



but not because the constitutional laws required it. It was even because it was intended to conduct America to the state of an independent nation, having its own government, and a supreme magistrate, that it was desired to direct things gradually towards this object, and to withdraw, little by little, the management of affairs from the local administrations, in order to concentrate it in one only and common point. It was also an efficacious mean of providing that no province, individually, should ever think of detaching itself from the Union, as, in such case, it would become not only unfaithful to the others, but also rebellious towards the general government of America. Notwithstanding considerations of such moment, this affair could not be managed without extreme difficulty, on account of the reciprocal jealousies of the provincial assemblies, which were not likely to renounce, but with the utmost repugnance, a part of their ancient authority, to be vested in a new and unusual administration. If the impulsion of the people had been less general, if the necessity of pursuing the career in which they were already so far advanced, had been less imperious, perhaps the total plan of the enterprise would have been marred by these partial ambitions. But the die was cast, and it was requisite either to move onward farther than would have been wished, or to return back, much farther than would have been apprehended. It was therefore in the midst of these hopes, and of this necessity, that the Congress drew up and published the articles of confederation; thus establishing invariably their authority, no longer upon the momentary impetus of popular feeling, but upon laws approved and sanctioned by the general will.

In the first place, the colonists bound themselves and their posterity, for the common defence against enemies, for the protection of their liberty and property, as also of their persons, and of the prosperity of America. Each colony retained its jurisdiction entire within its own limits, the right of regulating its internal administration, and an independent sovereignty in respect to all its domestic affairs. But, for the more convenient direction of public transactions, each colony was to elect deputies, who should convene in Congress at the time and place which should be appointed by the preceding Congress. In ordinary circumstances, the Congress should hold their session successively in each colony, observing a regular rotation. This body should have power to make war and peace, to contract alliances, to adjust controversies between the different provinces, and to establish colonies wherever it should be thought necessary. The Congress should be authorised to make laws of general utility, and for which the provincial assemblies should not be competent, as, for example, all those concerning the forces of the Union, and the affairs relating to commerce and the mint; the Congress should appoint all the officers, civil and military, of the Union, such as generals, admirals, ambassadors, and others; the charges of

the war, and other expenses of the Union, should be supported by the public treasure, which should be replenished by each colony, in proportion to the number of male inhabitants, from the age of sixteen to sixty years ; the number of delegates per colony, should, in like manner, be determined by that of the male citizens, so that there should be one representative for every five thousand male individuals ; the deliberations of Congress should be enacted with half the suffrages, and it should be allowable to vote by proxy ; there should be an executive council, composed of twelve persons, elected without Congress, four of whom should be succeeded every year ; the council, during the recess of Congress, should superintend the execution of its laws ; the executive decisions being always to be taken by two thirds of the votes ; the same council should be charged with the direction of general affairs, both internal and external ; it should receive all despatches coming from princes and foreign governments ; should prepare matters to be submitted to the consideration of the next Congress ; should fill, during the interval of its sessions, all the offices which should have become vacant ; and should, besides, have power to draw money from the public treasury. It was also regulated, that no colony should make war upon the Indian tribes, without the consent of Congress ; that, consequently, the frontiers and territory of every Indian nation should be acknowledged theirs and respected ; that agents should be established on the part of Congress among the Indian nations, in suitable places, with instructions to prevent frauds and impositions in the traffic with them. It was established as a principle, that the Union should subsist until the terms of arrangement proposed to the king, by the preceding Congress, should be accepted by England, the acts prohibitory of American commerce repealed, an indemnity granted for the shutting of the port of Boston, for the burning of Charlestown, and for the expenses of the war ; finally, until the British troops should have entirely evacuated the territory of America. It was added, that when the British government should have accomplished the foregoing conditions, the colonies would resume their ancient relations of friendship with Great Britain ; but that otherwise the confederation should be perpetual. Space was left to accede to the league for the provinces of Quebec, of St. John's, of Nova Scotia, of the two Floridas, and the Bermudas. Thus the Congress laid the foundations of American greatness.

Meanwhile, the colonies hesitated to accept the articles of confederation. North Carolina absolutely refused. Things were not yet arrived at the point of maturity, desirable for the establishment of a perfect union. The people suffer themselves too often to be guided by vain fears, or by vain hopes ; and, at this epoch, the greater part of the colonists still flattered themselves with the possibility of returning, some day or other, upon honorable terms, to their ancient footing with Great Britain. It was, indeed, quite evident, to what

object the Congress was tending. They considered reconciliation, if not as absolutely impossible, at least as extremely improbable. And, besides, if there had existed any hope of arrangement, the articles of Union would have enfeebled it greatly, not to say totally extinguished; and therefore, perhaps, the Congress had proposed them. For, omitting the offensive declarations, the menaces, and the laws contrary alike to the English constitution and to the tenor of charters, this new pretension of indemnities would alone have sufficed to interrupt all approach to reconciliation; for it could not be presumed that the British government would stoop to such ignominious conditions. It was therefore manifest, that while the two parties protested their desire to meet each other, they were both exerting all their efforts to render it impossible. It was no less evident, that when in parliament the adversaries of the ministers proposed concessions and terms of arrangement, it was with reason the latter rejected them, saying, that all these conciliatory measures would not only be useless, but even detrimental, because they would encourage the colonists to new demands, less admissible still. If the ministers themselves proposed, afterwards, and carried an act of conciliation, it was only a pretext to divide, and not to reunite. They were therefore in the right, when they resolved to continue the war, at all hazards; but they were in the wrong, not to carry it on with sufficient means.

I have no doubt, but, in reading this history, it will be observed with extreme surprise, that, while the people in all the colonies flew to arms, subverted all public order, and exercised every species of hostile demonstrations against the authority of the king, the governors, who represented him, preserving the calm of immobility, took no resolutions proper to reestablish obedience. But if no one of these governors is seen acting in a manner conformable to the importance of circumstances, it should be considered that none of them had regular troops at his disposal, to constrain the inhabitants to submission. The only force to which they could have recourse, to maintain the public tranquillity, and carry the laws into execution, was composed of the militia of the country, themselves a part of the insurgent people, and consequently favorable to their cause. It was not in America as in Europe, where a militia, which no longer makes part of the people, but which controls them, and with arms continually in hand, is always ready to execute the orders of the prince. In the English colonies, on the contrary, the militia was not distinct from the people themselves; and if this support was wanting to the government, it found itself, of necessity, to have none. The governors, however, did what was in their power to defend the authority of the king, each according to his character, and the circumstances in which he was placed. Their efforts had memorable effects, as will be seen by what follows; they produced the absolute extinction of the royal government.



We have already spoken of the misunderstanding which prevailed between the governor, lord Dunmore, and the assembly, and, generally, all the inhabitants of the province of Virginia. New disgusts broke out, upon the arrival of the news from England, of lord North's resolution of accord. It may be said, that an instrument invested with the names of peace and concord, was the occasion, on the contrary, not only of discord, but of open war. The governor, having convoked the assembly, placed this act before their eyes, enlarging greatly upon the goodness of parliament. He also hinted, that the fruit of their compliance would be the abrogation of the laws complained of. But soft words had little influence over the jealous and exasperated minds of the Virginians. The assembly, wishing to broach the quarrel, instead of entering into the discussion of the matter proposed, immediately took up the affair of the arsenal, and demanded its restitution; but the intervention of the governor being here necessary, they sent him a message, importing that he would be pleased to permit the entrance of this magazine. The altercation now became vehement; and during the wordy conflict, the people forced the gates of the arsenal, and bore off the arms. The state in which they found them, carried their fury to extremity. The powder was spoiled, the muskets without locks, the cannon without carriages; every thing had been plundered or destroyed, in the late disturbances.

The governor, on seeing the revolt, retired, with his wife and children, on board a ship of war,\* anchored near Yorktown, in the river of this name. Previous to his departure, he addressed a message to the assembly, by which he announced, that in order to withdraw from the danger to which himself and his family were exposed on the part of a furious multitude, he had thought prudent to take refuge in a place of security; he invited them to continue their business, while, on his part, he should continue his functions; and to send him a deputation on board his vessel, whenever they should think it necessary to confer with him upon the affairs of the time. The assembly answered, that they did not believe there existed, among the Virginians, any individual capable of perpetrating the excesses the governor apprehended; they expressed their regrets that he had not made them acquainted with his fears, before abandoning the seat of government; assuring him, that they would have taken all the measures he might himself have proposed, for his own security and that of his family. Finally, considering the little facility afforded, in such a place, for the transaction of affairs with the requisite convenience and promptitude, they earnestly requested him to return; to yield to the impatience of the inhabitants, and dispose them, by this proof of confidence, to order and tranquillity.

\* The Fowey man of war.

The governor replied with much bitterness, as the popular movements had agitated his mind beyond all reason. He concluded his letter, however, by glancing afresh at the conciliatory resolution, and with the assurance that he should esteem it his felicity to be the instrument of concord between the jarring parts of the British empire.

This bland conclusion was not sufficient to mitigate the irritation created by the menacing commencement of the letter. Accordingly, the answer of the assembly was more acrimonious still; as to the act of accord, they replied, it was a vain and insidious measure, which only changed the mode of oppression, without tending to relieve it; that, consequently, they would not accept it.

Such a temper of mind, in both the parties, precluded every glimpse of a better understanding. The assembly, having finally matured the bills and resolves before them, invited the governor to repair to Williamsburgh, in order to pass them. Lord Dunmore replied, that he would not expose his person in the midst of a mad populace; that they might send him the bills for examination; that he should be ready to receive the house, at his *present residence*, for the purpose of giving his assent to such acts as he should approve of. Here ended all correspondence between the governor and the colony of Virginia. If he would not trust himself with the Virginians, they were as little disposed to trust themselves with him. It might, besides, appear strange enough, that, in the midst of so many suspicions, the chief citizens of an entire province should go to immure themselves on board a ship of war, completely in the power of a person they looked upon as their enemy, and who might have retained them as hostages for the execution of his ulterior designs.

The assembly, when informed of the sentiments of the governor, declared publicly, that they suspected the existence of a sinister conspiracy against the people of the colony; they consequently warned the inhabitants to stand prepared to defend their property, and their rights, still more precious; they renewed their protestations of fidelity towards the king, of affection for the mother country; and, adjourning themselves to the month of October, separated. Thus ceased to exist, about the middle of July, the royal government in Virginia, after having lasted during more than two hundred years, with the tranquillity and happiness of all.

But arduous toils, and numerous dangers, still awaited the province.

The inroads of an enemy so superior in naval force, were to be feared upon the coasts, and upon the borders of all the great rivers which bathe it. Nor were the inhabitants without disquietude, in regard to the slaves, who were extremely numerous, and whom lord Dunmore had given out, he should instigate to revolt against their masters. If this cruel race, and cruelly treated, had joined the

loyalists in these first moments, when the Virginian government was still so recent, the most terrible consequences might have resulted, and perhaps the total extermination of the province. This consideration decided the Virginians to form a convention, in which they placed great confidence. They proceeded immediately to levy troops, provide munitions, and raise money ; in a word, to take all the measures they believed proper to secure the success of their cause.

Lord Dunmore, finding himself thus expelled from his own government, as well by his personal obstinacy as by the force of things, would not, however, being versed in arms, abandon the hope of recovering his authority. Independent of his character, (pertinacious, and capable of the greatest resolutions) he was also animated by a desire to perform some brilliant achievement for the service of his king, and encouraged by the idea that some violent movement would inevitably discover itself among the slaves. He likewise believed, that the number of the loyalists was considerable ; and that their party would not fail to put themselves in motion, when he should make his appearance upon the coasts, and even in the heart of the province, with a formidable squadron. This hope, if not absolutely chimerical, was at least very slightly founded ; but it is an error common to all times, and to all generals, to build extravagantly upon the intestine divisions of revolted subjects. All the auxiliaries that joined the governor, consisted in those individuals, who, having incurred the suspicion of the people, could no longer reside with safety in the province, and a certain number of slaves, of a profligate stamp.

With this troop, and with the frigates upon that station, he flattered himself he should be able to make some impression of importance in the adjacent country. He omitted no exertion to increase the strength of his squadron, and the number of his men ; and especially to approach nearer to the land. Having accomplished this purpose, by joining to his frigates a great number of light vessels, he began to move, at one time showing himself in this part, at another in that ; but of himself he was not able to produce any considerable effect. He expected, but in vain, that the people would rise, and take arms in favor of the king. Reduced to his own forces, he commenced hostilities which more resembled the attacks of pirates, than a fair and regular war. It was, in truth, a shocking spectacle, to see the governor of a province rushing upon all points to lay it waste, and to wrest by violence the provisions of which he had need ; while the people, who recently had obeyed his orders, endeavored to repulse him. But the Virginians alleged, that their conduct was sufficiently authorised by that of the royal troops, who under pretext of self-preservation, meditated the destruction of the whole province. They complained, that persons obnoxious to the governor was seized, and



confined on board ships ; that their plantations were ravaged, their houses fired, their negroes carried off ; devastations that were never executed without effusion of blood. The Virginians marched for the protection of the rivers and coasts, a few corps of militia, recently taken into pay by the provincial convention. The war that ensued was the more cruel, as it was useless, and could have no other effect but that of still more inflaming and exasperating the minds on both sides.

The governor, having surprised the town of Hampton, situated upon the bay of the same name, devoted it to the flames. His wish had been to take up his quarters, and assemble a considerable force at that point ; but the Virginians came up in multitude, and forced him to reembark.

Lord Dunmore proclaimed martial law ; the effect of which would have been to suspend all civil authority in the province. He exhorted the loyalists to repair to the royal standard ; to retain in their hands the contributions due to the crown, as well as other taxes, until the reestablishment of peace. Moreover, he declared free all slaves or servants, black or white, belonging to rebels, provided they should take arms and join the royal troops.

This proclamation, and especially the clause concerning slaves, proved that lord Dunmore was a man extremely deficient in prudence and moderation, but produced none of the effects he had expected. In the colonies, and even in all other countries, an universal cry arose against a measure which tended to disturb society in its very foundations, to destroy domestic security, to engender mortal suspicions, and to excite a race, naturally ferocious, to vengeance and to murder. In fact, this step of the governor was not merely useless,—it was pernicious ; it irritated the minds of the greater number, and gained over none.

Meanwhile, lord Dunmore again came on shore, and occupied Norfolk, an important city, situated upon the banks of Elizabeth river. In this place and its vicinity, a great number of loyalists resided. Some hundreds of these, and of the negroes, joined the governor, and gave him, in this part, the superiority over the enemy. Some of the provincial militia, having made a show of resistance, were routed without difficulty. He had already conceived the hope of reconquering the province, and of replacing it under the authority of the king.

The administration of the state of Virginia directed all their attention upon this point, where they perceived, with reason, the germ of a war more formidable ; and resolved to avert the evil, by a prompt remedy. They despatched, therefore, with all speed, for Norfolk, a regiment of militia, and a detachment of minute-men, under the command of colonel Woodford. The governor, apprised of this movement, very prudently occupied a strong position upon

the north bank of Elizabeth river, called Great Bridge, a few miles from Norfolk. This point was situated upon the direct route of the provincial troops. Here he promptly threw up works on the Norfolk side, and furnished them with a numerous artillery. The intrenchments were surrounded on every part with water and marshes, and were only accessible by a long dike. As to the forces of the governor, they were little formidable; he had only two hundred regulars, and a corps of Norfolk volunteers; the residue consisted in a shapeless mass of varlets of every color. The Virginians took post over against the English, in a small village, at cannon shot distance. Before them they had a long narrow dike, the extremity of which they also fortified. In this state, the two parties remained for several days, without making any movement. Lord Dunmore, having at length perceived that this delay was prejudicial to him, as well as beneficial to the Americans, who abounded in provisions, and received every day new reenforcements, found a motive in his personal courage, and perhaps in his contempt for the enemy, sufficient to order the attack. He hoped to be able thus to open himself a passage into the heart of the country. Accordingly, the 9th of December, before day, he directed captain Fordyce to assault the enemy, at the head of a company of grenadiers.

They marched boldly towards the American works, captain Fordyce leading the vanguard, and lieutenant Bathurst the forlorn hope. Captain Leslie followed, with a detachment of three hundred blacks and whites, and two hundred soldiers of the line. All the American camp instantly flew to arms, and prepared to defend themselves. The action continued for a good space of time, with incredible obstinacy. At length, captain Fordyce having been killed, at a few paces from the intrenchments, after exhibiting prodigies of valor, and a great part of his troop being either wounded or slain, the British fell back upon the bridge. The artillery of the redoubt prevented the Americans from pursuing. The negroes behaved very shabbily, and saved themselves by flight. The Americans treated the English fallen into their power with humanity, but the loyalists with rigor. This feat, on the part of lord Dunmore, savored more of the rash general, than the soldier of courage.

Experience having convinced the governor that he could not hope to make progress in this part, he abandoned Great Bridge, and retired to Norfolk, leaving a few pieces of cannon in the power of the enemy. Finally, not thinking himself secure in this city and the adjacent country, he took the resolution to repair to his ships again, the number of which was increased by the junction of all those that were found in the port of Norfolk. He could not, in fact, have too many; for many of the loyalists, forced to quit their country, sought refuge on board the fleet, bringing with them their furniture and most valuable effects. The provincials occupied Norfolk, which they found almost

deserted ; the greater part of the inhabitants having departed in the squadron of the governor.

While these events were passing upon the coasts of Virginia, a project of great importance was planned ; this was to raise in arms the inhabitants of the parts situated in the west of the colonies, but particularly of Virginia and of the two Carolinas, which were known to be well affected towards the royal cause. It was also hoped that the Indians would take the field, and not only harass the rear of the provincials, but even that, increasing in number and force, they would be able to traverse the provinces, and coalesce with lord Dunmore upon the coasts. A certain John Connelly, an enterprising, audacious man, born in the county of Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, was considered a fit instrument for the execution of this project. Having conferred with lord Dunmore, he received from him the most brilliant promises, and the most ample authority, to enable him to accomplish the objects of the mission which was confided to him. In pursuance whereof, he repaired to the banks of the Ohio, in order to sound the dispositions of the Indians, and of the loyalists who inhabited this part of the frontiers. Having succeeded beyond his hopes, he returned to make report to the governor. It was arranged, that the garrisons of the vicinity, and principally those of Detroit and fort Gage, in the country of the Illinois, should lend him assistance ; and it was expected, also, that the officers of the garrisons of Canada would second him. It was understood, that whenever his troops should have made their preparations, they were to assemble at Pittsburgh, and thence, passing the Alleghanies, scour Virginia, and effect their junction with lord Dunmore at the city of Alexandria, situated upon the banks of the Potomac. Fortune had shown herself propitious to these first essays. Connelly had passed several times without accident from one place to another, and kept his correspondence with the loyalists and Indians a profound secret. On his way to Detroit, he had already reached the extreme frontier of Maryland, near the town of Tamar, rejoicing within himself at having escaped so many perils, when he was detected, and arrested. The papers of which he was the bearer were published by order of Congress. Thus this mysterious plot, which lord Dunmore, for want of open arms, had been reduced to concert, proved like several others, completely abortive ; its sole results were greater animosity on the part of the colonists, and the annihilation of his own influence.

Meanwhile, Norfolk was menaced with a disastrous event. Although the greater part of the loyalists of this city and its environs, had sought refuge in the governor's fleet, there had, nevertheless, remained a considerable number of them ; either on account of their reluctance to leave their properties, or their dread of the sea and of famine, or perhaps because they hoped to find more lenity on the part of their fellow-citizens, who made profession of liberty, than



they had shown towards them, when they had been superior in this country.

But it is certain that the patriots, on acquiring the ascendancy, made them feel it cruelly, and overwhelmed them with all those vexations of which there are so many examples in civil wars, between men of different parties. The governor, transported with rage, and touched by the piteous cries of the loyalists, panted to avenge them. This reciprocal hatred was daily exasperated by the rencounters which took place very frequently between the two parties; the provincials watching at all the points of the shore to prevent the royal troops from landing, in order to forage in the country, and the latter, on the contrary, eagerly spying every means to plunder provisions upon the American territory. The multitude of mouths to be fed, kept them continually in a famishing state. A ship of war arrived in the meantime, in the bay of Norfolk. Lord Dunmore sent a flag on shore to apprise the inhabitants, that they must furnish provisions, and cease firing, otherwise he should bombard the town. The provincials answered only by a refusal. The governor then resolved to drive them out of the city with artillery, and to burn the houses situated upon the river. He sent in the morning to give notice of his design, in order that the women, children, and all except combatants, might retreat to a place of safety. The first of January, 1776, the frigate *Liverpool*, two corvettes, and the governor's armed sloop, opened a terrible fire upon the city, and at the same time a detachment of marines landed and set fire to the houses. The flames spread with rapidity, the conflagration became general, all was consumed. Finally, the provincials themselves fired all the adjacent country, that nothing might fall into the hands of the enemy, and to deprive the royal troops of this position.

Such are the effects of civil fury; such the results of human discords. But man is too often ambitious or deceived; and if all ages are fertile in the authors of tumults and wars, these artisans of mischief are no less fertile in expedients to clothe their projects with plausible pretexts; and thus the unfortunate people, victims of every calamity, are frequently ignorant of the real origin of the woes that overwhelm them. In this manner was destroyed one of the most opulent and flourishing cities of Virginia.

Having described the state of the province of Virginia, after the royal government had ceased, the order of history requires that we should relate what took place at this epoch in the other provinces. We have already mentioned the ardor manifested by the inhabitants of South Carolina, on their receiving intelligence of the affair of Lexington, that a provincial convention was formed, that its members entered into a confederation, and organised corps of infantry and cavalry, for the defence of the colony.

In the midst of this general movement, governor Campbell arrived in the province, who, notwithstanding the public agitation, was received with the attentions due to his rank. He conceived the idea of employing the militia, as a counterpoise to the regiments on pay, which had been levied by the convention or congress of the province, and to oppose against the convention itself, the provincial assembly. He hoped by this management to divide the patriots, and overturn their projects. Accordingly, of his own authority, he issued commissions to the officers of the militia, and convoked the assembly according to ancient forms. But in both these measures he failed of success; the militia continued firm in the cause of the people, and the assembly refused all his propositions so rigidly, that he was necessitated to dissolve it. He appeared disposed to remain peaceable for some time; but it was known that he maintained a secret intelligence with the loyalists, who were very numerous, and principally upon the frontiers, towards the mountains and lakes. To unmask him, the patriots resorted to the agency of a certain Adam Macdonald, captain in a provincial regiment, a man entirely devoted to their interests. He presented himself to the governor under the name of Dick Williams, and in the character of an emissary of the loyalists, commissioned to protest their fidelity, and receive his orders.

The governor, delighted at this overture, answered with unrestricted confidence. Macdonald came to make full report before the general council; the agitation was vehement. The council deputed to the governor some of its members, and with them Macdonald himself, to request that he would show them the despatches he had received from England. Campbell firmly refused. A motion was made to arrest him, but it was not adopted. The governor became intimidated, and retired on board a corvette at anchor in the port. He took with him the seal of the province. The council sent a message, entreating him to return; he would not. Thus ceased the royal government in South Carolina; all public authority was transferred from the ancient administrations, to the provincial convention, the committee of safety, and other popular establishments, to whose power the people fixed no other limits, except that they should protect the republic from all detriment.

But in the meantime, governor Campbell was not inactive. He knew the royalists were numerous in certain parts of the province, and he hoped that by exciting them, and erecting a standard, round which they could rally, he should be able to profit essentially by their succours. In the interior of the country, there existed a set of men called *regulators*. They had arrogated, in 1770, the right of executing the laws against malefactors; and they exercised their functions so openly, that of their own authority they inflicted corporal punishments upon such as incurred their animadversion. Lord Montague was sent to repress so odious an enormity, and his severity effectually re-

established the authority of the laws among this unruly generation. But the regulators had not forgotten the chastisements their unlawful combination had drawn down upon them, nor would they ever consent to adhere to the Congress and other popular administrations, which they deemed equally as irregular and illegal. In the same places were found many Dutch and Irish, who held their lands from the bounty and liberality of the king. Either out of gratitude, or the fear of losing their estates, if they should join the patriots, they stood firm in their loyalty, and were strenuously opposed to the new government. Their number was increased by certain other Irish, who had retired from the disturbances in the northern provinces, into this.

Governor Campbell had it in mind, to employ these individuals for the accomplishment of his designs. He circulated among them that the American colonies were altogether too feeble to resist the power of Great Britain; that the whole question turned upon a trivial duty on tea, which they were not accustomed to use; that the inhabitants of the coast opposed this impost, in order to have tea at a low price, without regarding that their obstinacy deprived the inhabitants of the upper country of a multitude of articles the most necessary to life; that the single expense of maintaining the provincial regiments, greatly exceeded the amount of all the taxes imposed by the parliament. The ill humor of these foreigners was still increased by the violences of the patriots, who insisted, whether willing or not, that they should accede to the confederation. And thus a great number that would have remained neutral, were constrained to throw themselves into the opposite party. In no part of the province were the loyalists so numerous, as in the space comprehended between the Broad and Saluda rivers. They refused to execute the resolutions of Congress, to subscribe the league, and to make levies of soldiers. The patriots, desiring to proceed peaceably, sent into those places two men of the greatest authority, William Henry Drayton and William Tennent. All their efforts and arguments, to dissipate the suspicions which had arisen among these people, produced little effect, if any. The rivalry between the two parties became every day more rancorous. At length, they flew to arms; and they were soon encamped, the one in front of the other. The wiser citizens interposed, to prevent the effusion of blood; and, after some days of negotiation, a compact was concluded, by which the loyalists pledged themselves to remain neuter. But these hopes of tranquillity were soon destroyed, by a certain Robert Cunningham, a turbulent spirit, and one of the most influential leaders of the loyalists; he industriously scattered the elements of discord. From all parts they rushed to arms anew. The Congress, wishing to smother these first sparks, ordered major Williamson, commanding the militia, to march against the seditious; but the latter were superior in number. The moment was critical; the Carolinian congress, having in front a Bri-



tish fleet and army, and a party of disaffected citizens in rear, could have no hope of victory. Nevertheless, to disconcert the plan of their adversaries, they marched towards the suspected places detachments of militia and of troops, under the command of colonels Richardson and Thompson; who were joined by colonels Rutherford and Polk, at the head of the militia of North Carolina. The loyalists, scattered, without a rallying point, and without leaders of reputation, transacting every thing with fear and hesitation, were forced to receive the terms of their conquerors.

This first expedition kept them quiet for a long time; they made no further movement until the English arms acquired the superiority in Georgia and South Carolina.

The inhabitants of the latter province being totally decided for war, all their attention was given to making the preparations that might enable them to carry it on with success. They resolved, in the first place, to provide themselves with powder, of which they were almost entirely destitute. They knew that an English vessel, laden with a great quantity of it, was then at anchor upon the bank, called the *bar of St. Augustine*, upon the coast of East Florida. Some fearless patriots, accustomed to the sea, made for the ship with extreme celerity, boarded her, and became possessed of fifteen thousand pounds of powder; which, with equal good fortune, they transported safe into Charleston. This acquisition was of singular utility in their great need. They supplied, from it, the militia of Massachusetts, as well as the army which soon after undertook the expedition of Canada.

But, there was still in the power of the king, fort Johnson, erected upon James's Island, which is situated in front of Charleston; this fortress, therefore commanded the city. Colonel Motte having landed upon the island in the night with a strong detachment of new levies, occupied the fort without obstacle; the garrison, as too feeble to resist, had retired on board the ships of war.

The chiefs of the people prohibited all persons whatsoever from supplying water or provisions to the ships of the king, otherwise than from day to day. The English blockaded the port, and made a great number of prizes, to the infinite prejudice of the city. This induced colonel Moultrie to occupy Point Huddrel, with a detachment of provincial troops. He planted there a battery of heavy cannon, which constrained the English to retire from this position and gain the open sea. Thus the city was liberated for the present, from the blockade of the British squadron. But to prevent its renewal, it was resolved to erect fortifications upon Point Huddrel, which defends the entrance to Charleston, by the channel of Hog Island; and to strengthen the works of fort Johnson, which secures the port on the side of James's Island. A new fort was also constructed in this Island, west of fort Johnson; then another upon Sullivan's Island, which received the name of Moultrie.

The provincial militia exercised, and the regiments upon pay increased their numbers every day. In all parts of the province preparations were made to repulse the attacks of the enemy.

However sincere was the zeal of the inhabitants to defend their country, it was stimulated, also, by the resolutions of the general Congress. They had resolved, that if Charleston was attacked by the English, three regiments of infantry should be maintained in the province at the expense of the Union; that if the convention or committee of safety should judge it necessary to seize or destroy any vessel whatsoever, it might do so, and rely upon the approbation of Congress. They recommended also, the erection of forts and batteries, in such places as should be thought most suitable.

Some agitation also began to manifest itself about this time in North Carolina, a province in which the loyalists were perhaps more numerous than in any other, with the exception, however, of New York. The governor, Martin, was an active man, who studied continually to devise new expedients to increase the party of the king. The patriots were especially solicitous with respect to the inhabitants of the upper countries of the colony, all Scotch and Highland emigrants, with whom it was ascertained that the governor held continual correspondence. The Congress had not neglected to take all proper measures to disconcert these projects. They had exhorted the partisans of liberty to form themselves into corps of militia, which, in case the provincial convention should see fit to order levies, should be considered as making part of the general army, and received into the pay of the Union.

The desires of the Congress were accomplished, if not with unanimous consent, at least with all requisite promptitude. A provincial convention was formed, which assumed the authority of the ordinary assembly of representatives. The committees of safety, and other popular institutions, were created as usual. The governor took umbrage at these measures, although he was not intimidated by them; and, in order to be able to sustain a first attack, and to give time, in case of emergency, for the loyalists of the upper parts to come to his assistance, he fortified, and furnished with artillery, his residence at Newbern. The people rose and seized six pieces of these cannon; the governor then fled precipitately for refuge to fort Johnson, upon Cape Fear river. The provincials, fearing he might fortify himself, and rally his forces at this point, in order to keep an open communication for the troops which should be sent against the colony, resolved to dislodge him. It also appears that they were apprehensive, lest the governor should proclaim the liberty of the negroes, in order to employ them for the reestablishment of the royal authority. Time was precious. They assembled their forces at Wilmington, an important city of the province, and gave the command of the expedition to colonel Ashe, who had passed from the

service of the king, into that of the people. They marched immediately to fort Johnson ; but the governor, not choosing to await so formidable an attack, had retired on board a ship of war. The following night, colonel Ashe entered the fort and reduced it to ashes. He afterwards ravaged the country, that it might furnish nothing to his adversary. The governor was declared an enemy to America, and accused of a design to raise the blacks against their masters. This imputation was not without foundation. He answered with a writing of excessive length, which he caused to be circulated in the province. But the provincial Congress pronounced this proclamation an infamous libel, and caused it to be publicly burnt by the hand of the executioner.

They drew up, about the same time, a long address to the people of Great Britain, full of the usual protestations. All these events singularly agitated the people ; but a new incident soon carried their fury to extremity. In the garden and cellars of the governor, it was discovered that he had secreted arms, powder, balls, and other munitions. The provincial Congress decreed a levy of one thousand regular troops, and another of three thousand minute-men. They created bills of credit for their support. The general Congress, wishing to give more stability to their authority, and knowing of what importance it was to propitiate the regulators and mountaineers that inhabited the upper countries, sent them two ministers of the gospel, to expound the nature of the present controversy between Great Britain and the colonies. The chiefs of the people neglected no means proper to forward their cause. Arms and money were provided, soldiers were exercised, the militia were organised, the torpid or lukewarm were stimulated and encouraged. The popular leaders in this province, surrounded by enemies, manifested an activity always increasing with the obstacles they had to surmount.

In Pennsylvania, affairs were transacted with greater moderation ; either because the character of the inhabitants was more pacific, or that the governor was endowed with greater prudence. However, the provincial assembly, which continued to sit in Philadelphia, and all the inhabitants generally, appeared not to want activity, in their preparations for defence ; the militia were exercised with great diligence and success. It was perceived that the breadth and depth of the Delaware, which bathes the walls of Philadelphia, exposed the city to imminent danger. The English ships might come thus far up the river, and cause infinite mischief not only to the city and province, but even to the entire confederation. It was therefore resolved to obstruct the passage, by sinking in the channel a construction of heavy timber, called a *chevaux-de-frise*. It consisted in two immense beams, laid across the bed of the river, parallel-wise, and at a suitable distance apart ; they were locked with traverse timbers ; and upon their upper surface, rose, with a certain inclination towards



the current of water, two other heavy beams, armed on the top with tusks of iron, to pierce the vessels that should attempt to ascend. All these frames, ponderous of themselves, and charged besides with enormous stones, could not be easily broken, subverted, or displaced. Ingeniously contrived, as well as skilfully executed, they were of no little utility, in the course of the war. The Pennsylvanians were also very diligent in providing themselves with arms and ammunition. The provincial assembly had appointed a committee of superintendence, to see that the arms were made with a desirable promptitude, and the requisite perfection. The gunsmiths, and other armorers, were continually watched and stimulated. The assembly also decided, that several battalions should be levied and completely equipped. A great quantity of powder was manufactured in the environs of Philadelphia; a single mill supplied five hundred pounds a week. Every thing, in brief, tended towards war. The governor was unable to resist an inclination so universal; he had no royal troops at his disposal.

The province, and particularly the city, of New York, found themselves in a painful situation. They were exposed on all parts, to the insults of the British fleet; the city had even still a garrison, though feeble, of royal troops. New reenforcements were expected from England; and it was known that all the corps that arrived in America, landed at New York, as their destined place of arms. The delegates of the province were therefore instructed, to move the Congress to prescribe the course to be pursued, in case of the arrival of the troops that were already embarked from Ireland for America. The Congress answered, they should stand upon the defensive, allow the English to land, and permit them to occupy the barracks, provided they should behave themselves peaceably; not, however, to suffer that they should erect fortifications, to interrupt the communication between the city and country; if they should employ force, to resist them with force; to transport the munitions of war into the interior of the province; to designate places of refuge for the women and children; finally, the Congress exhorted all the inhabitants to arm, and hold themselves in preparation for every event.

But it was not long before they were relieved from these anxious apprehensions. The royal troops arrived; but, instead of landing at New York, they went on shore at Sandy Hook, whence, by the orders of general Gage, they reembarked for Boston. The battle of Breed's Hill had enfeebled the garrison of that city, and new soldiers were needed to fill up the companies. At length, the detachment itself, which for so long a time had been stationed at New York, retired on board a ship of war which was anchored in the port. The city, thus delivered entirely from the presence of the royal troops, was replaced absolutely at its own discretion.

At this epoch, governor Tryon arrived from London at New York. He was a man of an active genius, an ardent character, and possessed of great influence in the province. He was received with marked respect. His continual efforts in favor of the royal cause, were generally crowned with success. Tranquillity, for a certain time, remained undisturbed. Then followed a quarrel, in which a royal ship fired upon the city with balls and grape-shot, because the inhabitants had seen fit to transport artillery from one place to another. A great number took refuge in the country. The governor demanded a conference with the convention, the committee of safety, and the officers of the militia. It was granted. He expressed the deepest concern at the present discord ; he begged they would use prudently the power which they had entire ; he observed, that violent measures would only widen the breach, and hazard the destruction of the city. This example shows clearly to what terms was reduced, and upon how frail a basis reposed, the royal authority at that time in America ; since even in the province of New York, that of all which numbered the most loyalists, the governor was driven to such extremity, that, instead of commanding, he was constrained to pray. Hence also it is manifest, that Tryon had been sent, not to govern a province that would no longer obey him, but to intrigue clandestinely, to sow division, to corrupt the good, and dispense to the wicked their hire.

How opposite such conduct was to the dignity of a powerful nation, and how proper to render it contemptible in the estimation of the universe, every one can imagine for himself. It would have been a much more seemly resolution, if the governor, upon ascertaining the situation of affairs, should have withdrawn from the province, and left it altogether in the power of the patriots ; for to govern without commanding, and to command without being obeyed, was a degradation of his rank, and of the royal authority itself.

The general Congress had become greatly alarmed at the artifices of governor Tryon. They feared he would at length succeed in exciting such malignant humors, as might issue in fatal results. They thought it expedient to prevent the evil ; and accordingly recommended, that, in all the colonies, every person, of whatever name or condition, whose opinions afforded motives of suspicion, should be arrested, and detained under a sufficient guard ; this was the law of suspected persons. The deputies of New York sent copies of it into their province. At this news, governor Tryon, having doubts of some strange resolution, promptly took refuge on board an English vessel moored in the port ; he carried off the seal of the province. But, towards the close of the year, with the approbation of the king, he addressed a proclamation to the inhabitants of New York, to apprise them of the dispositions of the prince, and the earnest desire he entertained that some honorable way of reconciliation between the

two parties might be devised. Thus vanished even the shadow of royal authority in this colony, after its action had in reality ceased long since. Such was the success of the hopes the ministers had placed in the manœuvres and intrigues of governor Tryon, whom they had considered as the most proper instrument to act upon a province of such principal importance.

It had recently been divided by the provincial convention into a certain number of districts, each destined to furnish a company. The organisation of these companies was the object of a special regulation. But this appearance of ardor was in many far from being sincere. Even members of the provincial Congress presumed to say, openly, that they would not receive the bills of credit; and that, when the English troops should have arrived, they would join the royal standard. The provincial soldiers themselves were emulous in deserting. So efficacious had been the whispers of Tryon; or, perhaps, so great were the avarice, the fear, or the loyalty, of the inhabitants. Admitting only the latter reason, it would be impossible for the colonists of New York to clear themselves of the reproach of hypocrisy and of cowardice, for not having dared openly to follow the royal banners, and for having, on the contrary, pretended a flaming zeal for the cause which the greater part of the Americans had espoused. But simulation and perfidy are never more frequent than in the political revolutions of empires. Those who lately served kings, afterwards serve republics; and ardent republicans become all at once royalists, according to the dictates of their ambition or their avarice. Such is the miserable condition of human nature, that it is never consistent with itself; and when a man abandons one party to coalesce with another, he is often more actuated by a culpable motive than a virtuous conviction.

Maryland followed the example of the other provinces. The authority of the ordinary assembly was here also transferred to a convention, which assembled in the city of Annapolis. It proposed the articles of a league, to be composed of its own members, and all the freemen of the province. They pledged their faith reciprocally, and all towards America, to persist, according to their power, in opposition, whether with arms or with commercial restrictions. They decreed, that forty companies of minute-men should be levied; and that all the inhabitants of the province, freemen, from sixteen to fifty years, except only the ministers of religion, and physicians exercising their profession, individuals in the service of the governor, minute-men, artillery-men, and those prevented by their religious opinions from bearing arms, should attach themselves to some one company of militia. Hence it appears how calm, how remote from all blind transport, was this people; since, in such a crisis, individuals, reputed most essential to the general utility, were exempted from military service; and since religious opinions were also perfectly respected.



The regular organisation of the militia ascertained the pay of the officers and that of the soldiers. A committee of safety was invested with the direction of affairs relating to the militia and minute-men; and even with the power of taking, during the recess of the convention, the measures deemed necessary for the good of the province. Subaltern committees were established, for local superintendence upon every point, and for the reciprocal transmission of useful intelligence. Finally, the convention created two hundred and sixty-six thousand six hundred and sixty-six dollars, in bills of credit, in order to defray the charges of the militia. Meanwhile, the people had already forced the gates of the provincial arsenal, and seized the arms and ammunition, which were found there in considerable quantity.

In New Jersey, the royal authority still subsisted in its ancient forms; but it was without power, since it was without arms. Accordingly, the real directing authority was that of the people; which had, for its support, both arms and the general opinion. The militia organised and exercised themselves, according to the regulations published by the provincial Congress. The people had taken possession of the public chest; a sum of twenty to thirty thousand pounds sterling it contained, was appropriated to pay the militia. Besides the provincial militia, the general Congress invited the convention of New Jersey to levy, without delay, two battalions, at the expense of the public treasure; the officers were to have the same pay as those of the confederate army, and the soldiers to be engaged but for one year. In the meantime, governor Franklin convoked the provincial assembly. In the speech he addressed them, he expressed his grief at the present troubles; and announced, that the commanders of the British fleets upon all the American coasts had orders to act offensively against every port or place whatsoever, in which the officers of the king should be insulted, or in which troops should be levied, forts erected, or the public magazines plundered. He spoke also of the desire of independence; and added, that, as to the safety of his own person, he would refer it to their good faith. The assembly, in their answer, expressly denied any thought of independence; they assured the governor, that he might be tranquil with respect to his safety; and, finally, that as to the disturbances, they deplored them sincerely, but could do nothing to remedy them, since their cause was in the acts of parliament.

The two provinces of Connecticut and Rhode Island were inhabited by men naturally the zealots of liberty; and, not having the restraint of a royal governor, as by their charters they had the privilege of electing their own, they had long since provided themselves with men, arms, and munitions. These measures of safety were the more essential, as the vicinity of the English troops of Boston alarmed their suspicions; and they saw enemy vessels continually upon

the coasts, employed in carrying off provisions, not only for their own use, but also for that of the garrison besieged in that city. Besides this, captain Wallace, commanding a ship of the king, with some other armed vessels, greatly harassed their commerce, capturing daily merchant vessels belonging to one or other of these provinces. At length, he made a furious attack upon the town of Bristol. The houses, the stores, the churches, suffered excessively from the fire of his artillery ; which continued till the inhabitants, at evening, consented to supply with fresh meat this man without pity. But these hostilities committed by the vessels of the king against a defenceless town, did but increase the already too violent disgusts of the Americans, who complained of them with much asperity, in a multitude of writings, both public and private.

But Wallace was not of a character to allow himself lightly to be diverted from his resolutions ; and perhaps he was also spurred on by necessity. The blame should not be imputed to him, but to those ministers who by their rigorous counsels had provoked the war, without having prepared the requisite means to sustain it ; consequently, as it was impossible to fight in the open field, to conquer, it became necessary to pillage, in order to live. Captain Wallace, therefore, employed himself with great activity, in ravaging, by his piracies, the coasts of Connecticut and Rhode Island. The army of Massachusetts sent to the succour of the Rhode Islanders a detachment of soldiers, under the command of general Lee. This man, of a violent character, and little accustomed to respect the laws and public order, when it was in question to favor the American revolution, immediately compelled the people he came to defend, to bind themselves, by the most terrible oaths, to break off all communication with the instruments of ministerial tyranny, vulgarly called, said the words of the oath, the troops and fleets of the king ; not to lend them any assistance whatever ; to denounce traitors before the public authorities ; and to take arms for the defence of American liberty, as often as it should be required of them by the general Congress, or the provincial magistrates. The Congress disapproved this conduct of general Lee ; at which he gave himself little concern. He declared it pusillanimous to respect the civil laws, in the midst of arms ; and, in times of revolution, he considered all means legitimate, by which he might attain his ends ; a manner of acting, which, if it conducts one revolution to its object, leaves, and even prepares, as experience demonstrates, all the elements of another to follow it.

The assembly of Rhode Island decreed, that those of the inhabitants of the colony who should hold intelligence with the British ministers or with their agents, or should supply the armies or fleets with arms or military or naval stores, or should serve as pilots to the English ships, should incur the pain of death, and the confiscation of their lands and effects. They pronounced the confiscation of the

estates of some individuals, whom they declared enemies to the liberties of America. They emitted the sum of twenty thousand pounds sterling, in bills of credit. These measures, and the presence of general Lee, secured the tranquillity of Rhode Island.

Governor Wentworth still continued in New Hampshire; but, little by little, the patriots acquired the superiority, and his authority declined in proportion. Fearing, at length, some vexatious accident, he withdrew into the castle denominated William and Mary.

The popular administrations had also succeeded the ancient authorities, in Georgia. The partisans of the king were, however, the prevailing number; and the general Congress had sent thither, by way of precaution, a battalion armed at the expense of the Union. But, before it had reached its destination, a very sanguinary action had happened in the city of Savannah, between the patriots, who occupied the fort, and the royal troops, who assaulted and retook it. The capitulation was observed, and the vanquished had not to complain of any cruelty. The patriots were, however, predominant in the rest of the province; and gallantly prepared themselves to recapture, by storm, the citadel of Savannah. They were better armed, and more united, than their enemies, who were unprovided with munitions, and found themselves dispersed in different places.

Thus ceased, as we have related, the royal authority in the different provinces. It was replaced, progressively, by that of the people; that is, by the congresses or conventions extraordinary, that were formed in each colony. But this was deemed insufficient, by those who directed the affairs of America. Their real object being independence, and the present state of things, as irregular and precarious by its very nature, leaving a way open of arrangement with England, and of return to the ancient connexion and dependence, they desired that such a system should be established in each province as should have the appearance of a permanent constitution, in order to satisfy the world that the Americans were capable of governing themselves by their own laws. But the chiefs of the popular party had many difficulties to surmount in the execution of this design, notwithstanding the ardor which manifested itself in all parts to second their operations. The greater number approved resistance, but were opposed to independence, or at least shuddered at the idea of openly asserting it. For this reason, those who had the supreme direction of affairs, fearful of injuring their cause by too much precipitation, resolved to proceed with extreme circumspection; and marched up to their object, always protesting that their efforts were aimed in quite another direction.

It was highly important to commence the execution of this plan, with the provinces which discovered the greatest aversion towards England. It was hoped, that when it should be accomplished in one or more, the others would soon imitate the example. No pro-



vince appeared more suitable to give it than that of Massachusetts. The provincial Congress of this colony issued circulars, for the election of representatives, authorised to constitute the form of government. Two hundred delegates assembled at Watertown, and adopting the ancient forms of the British constitution, resolved themselves into an ordinary assembly, or house of representatives, and assumed all the authority attributed by the ancient statutes to these assemblies. They afterwards established a permanent council, to assist the governor in his deliberations. Thus the royal authority was converted at first into tumultuary popular authority, and at length into regular popular authority. All these operations were performed, as they said, not with any view to independence, but in order to induce the English to consent to a just and honorable arrangement. One of the first acts of this house was to raise the sum of thirty thousand pounds sterling, by means of a tax; which excited a dudgeon the more intense, as the people had persuaded themselves that since they were in insurrection to avoid paying taxes to England, they ought at least to be excused from paying any to their own government. But the other colonies discovered great backwardness to follow the route marked out by Massachusetts; either because its views appeared too manifestly aimed at independence, or, that, being placed in peculiar circumstances, the other colonies, differently situated, did not think proper to tread in its steps. But the American chiefs, far from being discouraged, resolved to employ the authority of the general Congress. They procured from New Hampshire new instructions to the delegates of that province, requiring them to take the sense of Congress respecting the mode of administering justice, and the internal government of the colony. This discussion excited violent debates; many members perceived the scope of it but too distinctly. The patriots, however, aided by circumstances, and their own intrepidity, at length prevailed. It was decided, that the provincial convention of New Hampshire should be invited to convene representatives of the people, from all the towns, that they might take such measures, and pass such laws, as they should judge best calculated to secure peace and order in the province, during the present contest. But the provincial convention, either from impatience, or in order to inspire greater interest, by a demonstration of glowing zeal, had anticipated the resolution, and the circulars for the election of representatives were already expedited. They assembled at Exeter, took the name and character of the house of representatives, and established the usual council.

The example of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, appeared still not sufficient to decide the other provinces to take the same resolutions. The inhabitants of the other colonies were not exempt from jealousy towards those of New England. It was therefore

desirable that the plan proposed should be executed in some one of the central provinces. For this purpose Virginia was the best adapted, as well on account of its extent and power, as by reason of the political shocks it had recently experienced, since lord Dunmore, by the proclamation of martial law, had caused the entire cessation, in that province, of all civil authority on the part of England. The general Congress, therefore, made, with respect to Virginia, the same resolutions as in the case of New Hampshire.

Among the members to whom this business was referred, Samuel Adams merits to be remarked, who labored in it with distinguished ardor, and appeared to esteem its success a personal triumph.

At this epoch, it was learned by the news from England, that the government had disdained to make answer to the petitions of Congress, addressed to the king, and transmitted by Penn, the late governor of Pennsylvania. It was understood further, that none of the ministers had condescended to ask him any questions relative to the affairs of America. This was an unequivocal proof of their obstinacy, and irrevocable resolutions. The animosity of the colonists became, in consequence, more violent, and the enterprise of the authors of independence infinitely more easy. They declared, in all places, that nothing could be hoped for any longer from the English government; and that the only way of safety which remained, was to display formidable forces, to shake off an odious yoke, and learn to walk without leading-strings.

This discourse had no success with the general assembly of Philadelphia, who, though inferior to none in their zeal for resisting the extraordinary laws of parliament, would hear no mention of independence. They manifested their discontent, by enjoining it upon their deputies to the general Congress, to oppose every proposition that should tend towards a separation from the parent state, or any change in the form of government. In the midst of such conflicting efforts, America moved onward to independence.

But it is time to return to the war that was carried on under the walls of Boston. The Americans had to contend with two capital difficulties; the one was the want of powder, which still continued, notwithstanding all the efforts used to procure a sufficient supply; the other was the approaching expiration of the term for which the soldiers were enlisted. Either persuaded that the war would be of short duration, or jealous of standing armies, the colonists had engaged their troops but for one year. They were therefore in danger of seeing the whole army disbanded, at the conclusion of the present year, and the siege thus raised in a day. To remedy, in the first place, the scarcity of powder, as their country could not furnish it in sufficient quantity, they determined to exert all their efforts to procure it from foreigners. Several fast-sailing vessels were sent to the coast of Guinea, whence they brought home

immense quantities, having purchased it of the European ships employed in that trade. The Philadelphians, knowing the favorable dispositions of the inhabitants of the Bermudas, and their great want of provisions, despatched thither a large brig, and the Carolinians a corvette, which brought away about one hundred and ten casks of powder. The assembly of Massachusetts prohibited the consumption of it in firing at game, or in rejoicings. Then only began to be less felt the defect of this first instrument of war. It remained to obviate the inconveniences of the expiration of the soldiers' term of service ; the Congress sent a deputation to the camp, in order to concert with general Washington the most efficacious means to prevent the dissolution of the army. The deputies were all men of distinguished sagacity ; and, among the most conspicuous for authority and reputation, was doctor Benjamin Franklin. They managed this negotiation with such address, that almost all the troops consented, but not without extreme difficulty, to continue in the pay of the Union.

The Congress ordained, besides, that the besieging army should amount to the number of more than twenty thousand men ; and that each colony should levy battalions, at the expense of the continent.

About this time Dr. Church, first physician of the army, was declared traitor. He kept up a secret correspondence within Boston. Being detected, he was brought before the house of representatives, whereof he was a member. He did not deny, but said he had only acted for the good of the country. Unable to prove it, he was expelled the assembly. Some persons pretended that this whole affair was but an artifice. The Congress decreed that the accused should be confined in the prisons of Connecticut.

General Gage returned to England, having been recalled by the king. His conduct had not answered the expectation of the government ; he had employed the ways of mildness, when he should have displayed force ; and violence, when persuasion would have sufficed. He arrived in America, accompanied with general affection ; he left it abhorred ; perhaps less through his own fault than that of the ministers, who, in place of rigorous decrees, should have sent powerful armies ; or, instead of armies, conciliatory conditions, consonant with the opinions of the Americans. But men commonly know neither how to exert all their force, nor to surmount the shame of descending to an accommodation ; hence delays, hesitations and half measures so often prove the ruin of enterprises. William Howe, a commander much esteemed for his talents, and distinguished for his birth, succeeded general Gage.

Washington found himself, at that time, surrounded with many and serious difficulties ; they proceeded from the organisation of his army ; and increased, every day, in proportion as the first ardor of his troops abated. Every hour it became more evident, that the success of



wars resides not in popular impulses, but in good arms, discipline, and obedience ; things the American camp was far from offering ; and especially the two last. One principal vice was this ; the greater part of these troops not having been raised by authority of Congress, but by that of the provincial assemblies, their organisation, instead of being uniform, presented an excessive variety in the formation, equipment, rank, pay, discipline, and, generally, in all that relates to military service. It is easy to conceive how much it must have suffered from such a disparity. Washington had placed great dependence upon the troops of Massachusetts, not only as they were the most numerous, but also as he believed them animated with that zeal which distinguished their province, and therefore qualified to undertake and support whatever might contribute to the success of the war. The general was much deceived in his expectation. The soldiers of Massachusetts, guided by the enthusiasm of liberty, had themselves elected their own officers,—a thing incompatible with discipline ; these officers not being respected, they exacted obedience in vain. It must be admitted, moreover, that some of them degraded themselves by a rapacity which fell indiscriminately upon private as well as public property. They clamored liberty, in order to be able, without restraint, to satiate their incredible avarice. The state of affliction in which their country was plunged, far from touching them with compassion or concern, seemed rather to increase in them their infamous propensity for pillage. This disastrous scourge has at all times been one of the first results of political revolutions. The most depraved, the most profligate men, while they profess the most ardent love for the public good, are even those who, under this veil, abandon themselves without shame to the thirst of rapine that consumes them. In this disorder, the voice of good citizens is not heard because the wicked are the loudest in their protestations of the same zeal ; and the wicked cannot be repressed, because their services are wanted. Another vice of the American army was that each colony, and not the general Congress, paid, clothed, and victualled its own troops ; which resulted in a confusion extremely prejudicial to good order and discipline. As yet it had not been thought of, or, perhaps, in the midst of so many different interests, it had not been possible to create a commissary or intendant-general, having charge of all these details of administration. The disorder was greater still. Some American generals, dissatisfied with the promotions made by Congress, had retired disdainfully to their homes. *Maladies*, also, had found their way into the camp, and especially the dysentery, a pest so fatal to armies. The close of autumn already had rendered the cold very sensible ; the soldiers suffered severely, from want of barracks. The Congress, however, had not neglected this point ; but the contractors, after having received the necessary funds, furnished nothing ; and, according to their custom, exclaimed every

where that they were not paid. Thus all the wrongs appeared to rebound upon the government ; so industrious is this race of men in creating confusion, in order to veil their juggling operations ! Nevertheless, Washington, by his prudence and by his authority, provided for all wants. If he acquired an imperishable glory, in having conducted the present war to a happy conclusion, praises not inferior are assuredly due him for having kept together an army composed of so many different elements, and beset by so many afflicting wants. The latter success is not less honorable, and perhaps of more difficult attainment, than victory itself.

The Americans, to whom the spectacle of an army was entirely new, came from all the environs, and even from remote parts, to behold it. Men and women arrived in throngs at the camp of Boston, and demonstrated a lively satisfaction at the martial air of their fellow-citizens. The soldiers felt their courage revive, and the inhabitants their hopes. The Indians themselves were attracted. Distrustful and incredulous by nature, they wished to ascertain with their own eyes the truth of what they had heard related. They were received with particular civility. In order to amuse the Americans, or to create a high opinion of their strength and address, they gave frequent representations of feasts and combats, after their mode. The mutual expressions of benevolence, the familiarity that ensued, and the presence of the numerous battalions of the Americans, which held the British troops locked up within the walls of a city, made such an impression upon the Indians, that, notwithstanding all the seductions and all the importunities of the English, they generally testified a great repugnance to follow their banners. The colonists observed these sentiments with no little satisfaction.

Although no action of moment was engaged about Boston, yet warm skirmishes happened frequently, in which the Americans acquired new intrepidity and love of glory. Washington ardently desired that his troops should often encounter the enemy, in these miniature battles, that their energy might not languish from inaction, and that they might become familiar with the din of arms, and the face of the enemy.

Meanwhile, the distress in which the garrison of Boston found itself, increased from day to day. The supplies procured by the English vessels, in their excursions upon the neighboring coasts, were altogether inadequate to the exigencies of a necessity so extreme. The inhabitants had removed their grain and cattle to inland places ; and what remained they resolutely defended with arms. Nor could the English have much hope of drawing provisions from the adjacent islands, or from other parts of the American continent, still subject to the king, since they were themselves in want. This scarcity was produced by a decree of Congress, which prohibited all exportation of provisions or merchandise from the colonies towards Canada,

Nova Scotia, the island of St. John, Newfoundland, and the two Floridas, as well as to the places where the English carried on their fisheries. It often happened, that the parties landed by the latter, to forage upon the coasts of Massachusetts, were attacked and repulsed by the provincials. The English marine had orders to treat as enemies the places that should resist the authority of the king. Not content with resisting, the inhabitants of Falmouth, a flourishing maritime town of Massachusetts, had molested a ship laden with the effects of some loyalists. The English bombarded it, and also landed a detachment, which reduced it to ashes.

The destruction of Falmouth provoked a very energetic resolution on the part of the assembly of Massachusetts. A short time before, they had ordained the arming of several ships, for the protection of the coasts. Then, exercising sovereign power, they decreed that letters of mark and reprisal should be granted; and that courts of admiralty should be created, to judge of the validity of prizes. They declared, moreover, that their intention was merely to defend their coasts; and that no vessels were to be seized, but such only as should be laden with provisions for the soldiers who made war against the Americans.

Not long after, the general Congress itself, perceiving the necessity of intercepting the English navigation, and of protecting the coasts of the continent, and also observing the success of the cruisers of Massachusetts, decreed that a fleet of five ships of thirty-two guns, five others of twenty-eight, and three of twenty-four, should be constructed and armed; one in New Hampshire, two in Massachusetts, one in Connecticut, two in Rhode Island, two in New York, four in Pennsylvania, and one in Maryland. The command of this squadron was given to commodore Hopkins.

The Congress appeared to hesitate as to granting letters of mark and reprisal. They decided, however, for a measure, which, though in name less hostile, yet in reality produced the same effects. They authorised their ships to capture all those which should attempt to lend assistance to the enemy, in any mode whatsoever. They also created courts of admiralty.

Thus, little by little, they drew into their hands the entire sovereign authority. The Americans made incredible despatch in equipping their ships; they soon swarmed in the neighboring seas, and took from the English an immense number of prizes, who, little suspecting so bold a sally, saw themselves, with confusion, surprised upon an element, of which, until then, they had with reason considered themselves the absolute masters. The activity of this new marine was no less beneficial to the Americans, than fatal to their enemies. The British government, informed of the distress to which the garrison of Boston was reduced, had embarked, at a prodigious expense, an immense quantity of oxen, and all sorts of live



cattle, of salt meat and of vegetables, to victual a place of such importance with all expedition.

Contrary winds, in the first place, retarded the transports at sea, beyond the expected term; the cattle died, the vegetables perished. The residue at length arriving upon the coast of America, became almost entirely the prey of the American ships, and that often under the very eyes of the British commanders, who, either becalmed or opposed by the winds, were unable to succour them. At Boston, wood was totally wanting; the government, in order to remedy this deficiency, had embarked in this convoy a large quantity of coal. The greater part fell into the power of the Americans; thus, the garrison, and even the inhabitants of Boston, in the midst of the most rigorous season, found themselves absolutely destitute of fuel. Nor did fortune show herself only propitious to the Americans in their efforts to intercept the means of subsistence, which had been sent from England for the garrison; she delivered also into their hands the arms and munitions of war, of which they were themselves in the most urgent need.

Pressed by a necessity continually increasing, general Howe had already sent out of Boston, and caused to be transported to the neighboring shores, more than seven hundred useless mouths. It was said at the time, that among those individuals were found several diseased with the smallpox. If the fact be true, as least it cannot be thought to have been the result of an odious design to infect the American camp; the mind of general Howe being certainly altogether incapable of such an atrocity. It is true, however, that many Americans both credited and published it. The assembly of Massachusetts, either believing these rumors, or wishing them believed, decreed all the precautions usual in similar cases. Meanwhile, in order to procure fuel, general Howe was constrained to demolish several houses in Boston; for the light vessels of the Americans cruised so actively along the coasts, that all hope of procuring either wood or coal from the neighboring towns had vanished.

Meanwhile, the house of representatives of Massachusetts, created fifty thousand pounds sterling in bills of credit, and knowing how naturally men allow themselves to be guided by words and images, they caused the bills to be decorated with great care. Their emblem was an American, holding in the right hand a sword, around which were inscribed these Latin words, '*Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem.*' With the left, he supported the motto, '*Magna Charta,*' and at the foot, '*Made in defence of American liberty.*' The House also ordered, that the army should be supplied with fuel. But it seemed that they did these things with a certain reluctance, and very ill grace; impatience or avarice had sensibly chilled the zeal of these patriots, of late so ardent. General Lee, accustomed to express himself without any sort of reserve, was not sparing of

censure towards them; he openly called them narrow and pusillanimous souls, who, apprehensive of losing popular favor, wanted courage to take a vigorous resolution, or to strike a decisive blow. The Congress, meanwhile, decreed, that by virtue of the law of retaliation, any harsh treatment which should be inflicted upon those among the Americans who might fall into the power of the enemy, should be revisited upon those partisans of ministerial oppression, whom the fortune of war might place in their hands. This question of the reciprocal treatment of prisoners of war, had given birth to violent debates between the one party and the other. We have letters written upon this subject, in a very animated style, to each other, by generals Gage and Washington. Though it is probable that the wrongs might have been mutually exaggerated, it is certain that the laws of war were not observed towards the prisoners, and that much inhumanity was manifested in the proceedings against them. Can it excite our astonishment? Are not these the ordinary fruits of civil war?

Such was, about the close of the year 1775, the political and military situation of the province of Massachusetts, and such the events which took place under the walls and in the vicinity of Boston. Those who occupied this city were afraid to venture out, and every day experienced a more afflicting dearth of provisions and firing; while those without made no attempt to attack them, believing themselves secure of an eventual triumph by simple perseverance.

But the most important expedition of all this year was incomparably the invasion of Canada, by the American troops. The Congress had reflected, that it was not assuredly, without views of great interest, that the ministry had sent for governor in this province, general Carleton, a man of resolute character, vast genius, and brilliant name for military achievements. He was invested, as we have seen, with such extensive powers as no governor before him had ever offered example of. It was known that he exerted all his efforts to stir the Canadians and Indians, and stimulate them to arms against the colonies. Though at the commencement he had found great repugnance among the first, it was to be feared that, by employing address and authority, he might succeed, at length, in drawing them to his standard. The dispositions of the people of Canada were not unknown; always French at heart, and even somewhat fickle. It was known, also, that they cherished a sullen discontent on account of the act of Quebec; which, though favorable to their religion, replaced them, however, in their ancient dependence towards the nobles, whom they detested. It was therefore essential to take advantage of their present sentiments, before Carleton should have gained them. It was hoped that when the Americans should have penetrated into Canada, the inhabitants would not hesitate to espouse their cause, excited on the one hand by their hatred towards the nobility, and reassured on the other by the moderation which the colonists had generally manifested in

matters touching religion. The province of Canada was, besides, unfurnished with troops of the line; they had all been called to Boston. Moreover, the Congress had been informed, that in the following spring the government was to make a grand effort in this province; that numerous forces, arms, and munitions, would be poured into it, in order to attack the colonies in the back; an operation, which, if not seasonably prevented, might have fatal consequences. The colonists, assailed at the same time in front and rear, could not have expected to resist.

The design of an expedition to Canada was also encouraged by the happy success of the enterprise of Ticonderoga, and of Crown Point, which had opened for the Americans the gates of this province. Occasion could never be more propitious; the English troops, shut up in Boston, and occupied with their own defence, were in no situation to carry succours into a part so remote from the provinces of the confederation. But it was to be feared, that longer delays would afford time for the British ministry to make the necessary preparations to overpower the colonies by a single effort, and reduce them to their former dependence. Here, also, another essential consideration presented itself. In the origin of popular movements, the chiefs should endeavor to achieve some brilliant enterprise, in order to maintain the excitement of minds, otherwise they run the risk of seeing the sudden extinction of the enthusiasm they have kindled; and the epoch of the return of order is always that of the downfall of agitators. In perilous enterprises, attempted by insurgent people, hope and fear are created and annihilated with equal promptness. The more just they believe their cause, the more strenuously they defend it; and they incline to believe it just, as it proves successful. According to all these considerations, the expedition of Canada was decided. Prudent men, however, could not shut their eyes upon the numerous difficulties it presented. This was no longer an adhering to the defensive, but, on the contrary, a proceeding the most offensive, against a prince to whom fidelity was still protested, even carrying arms into one of his provinces, which had in no shape demanded the succours it was pretended to offer it. This was not merely exciting the peaceable and uncomplaining subjects to revolt against their lawful sovereign, but also violently occupying their country, and dragging them by force into sedition.

Was it not to be feared, that an enterprise so audacious would discover too openly the intentions of the general Congress; and that then, those of the colonists who combated with sincerity to obtain the revocation of the oppressive laws, at the same time abhorring the idea of a total separation, and even desiring to resume their former relations with Great Britain, would immediately abandon a cause which would no longer be theirs? Many members of Congress were not without apprehensions of losing, by the execution of this design, the



favor which a great number of the inhabitants of England, and many members of parliament, had hitherto manifested towards the American cause. From offended subjects, should the colonists become dangerous enemies; from oppressed inhabitants, oppressive soldiers; from citizens alarmed at the shadow of tyranny, the insatiable invaders of a peaceable province? Prudence would also suggest, that the fear of seeing pillaged or destroyed the effects and the merchandise belonging to England, at this time largely accumulated in Canada, and especially in the city of Quebec, could not fail to alienate the minds of all the parties interested. But it was said, on the opposite side, that, since arms had now been taken up, and the first blood already effused, to persist in a strictly defensive war was to allow the enemy a manifest advantage, who had not the same scruples; that, seeing hostilities were commenced, it was essential to prosecute them with all possible vigor; and that certainly a more sensible blow could not be struck at the enemy, than this of assaulting him in his weakest part.

‘Does any one imagine,’ said the partisans of this system, ‘that England is about to perplex herself with this distinction of operations defensive, and operations offensive? Her hand will visit vengeance upon us, wherever it can reach us. With arms alone, and used too with vigor and gallantry, not by timorous counsels, can we hope to avert the impending tempest of perdition. The enterprise proposed offers all the probabilities of success; when we shall have obtained it, those who still hesitate, even those perhaps who blame, will have vanquished all their doubts. In whatever man undertakes, there is always a grain of uncertainty, a particle of danger; but generous minds are not to flinch at this. The ancient adage should not be forgotten,—he that acts not when he can, acts not when he would.

‘Let us be persuaded, finally, that the eloquent orators of the two houses of parliament, either from love of liberty, as they pretend, or at least from ambition and from the desire to thwart the ministers, will not abstain from defending, and even extolling, our cause, when we shall have done much more than attack the province of Canada.’

The resolution having been carried in favor of the expedition, the Congress were not tardy in taking all the measures proper to secure its success. Three thousand soldiers, partly inhabitants of New England and partly of New York, were selected for the enterprise. They were commanded by the two brigadier-generals, Wooster and Montgomery, under the direction of major-general Schuyler; these three officers enjoyed the public confidence unlimited. As, in order to reach the heart of Canada, it was requisite to traverse lake Champlain, the river Sorel, and the river St. Lawrence, so broad and deep under the walls of Quebec, orders had been given to construct rafts at Ticonderoga and at Crown Point, in order to convey the troops wherever it might be thought necessary. The country into which it

was purposed to enter not making part of the American Union, and governing itself by its own laws, it could not be hoped that its inhabitants would receive the bills of credit which were current in the colonies; and, on the other hand, the idea was insupportable, that the soldiers should live at discretion, in a country it was desired to gain and conciliate. Consequently, the Congress made an effort to glean together the sum of fifty thousand dollars in specie. It was also prudent, to avoid being taken in rear, to secure the friendship of the Indians that inhabited the banks of the Mohawk, which empties into the Hudson river, a little above Albany. For the same reason, general Schuyler had remained in that city, in order to cultivate a good understanding with those tribes, with whom he possessed a powerful influence. General Montgomery had already repaired to Crown Point, with a part of the army, and was expecting the arrival of the residue. Governor Carleton, who was much on his guard, seeing himself menaced by a superior force, reflected, that if he could defend against the Americans the entrance of the river Sorel, it would be impossible for them to penetrate into Canada. He accordingly caused to be constructed and armed a large brig, with some vessels of less force, and intended to station them at the outlet of the lake into the Sorel; hoping thus, and with reason, to interdict the passage, with effect, to the Americans. General Montgomery was informed of it; and, perceiving all the importance of this project of Carleton, determined to prevent it, by moving rapidly with the few troops he had, towards the Sorel. Upon his arrival there, he proceeded to occupy *Ile aux Noix*, a little island, situated upon the entrance of the river, near the lake. In the meantime, general Schuyler arrived from Albany, after having left the necessary orders for marching the troops of the expedition to *Ile aux Noix*. Here the two generals having met, addressed a proclamation to the Canadians, exhorting them to join the Americans, in order to defend their liberties. They declared they entered their country not as enemies, but as friends and protectors, coming only to combat against the British garrisons. Then, in order to unite force with demonstrations, they determined to approach fort St. John, which, situated upon the left bank of the Sorel, commands it entirely, and closes the passage towards the river St. Lawrence. The Americans moved, therefore, but without artillery, towards St. John, and landed at a mile and a half distant from the fort, in a marsh, through which they marched in good order, with a view to reconnoitre the place. In their progress, they had to sustain a furious attack on the part of the Indians, who attempted to oppose their fording a river. Having repulsed them, they, in the course of the night, established themselves in sight of the fort, and began to throw up works; but having learned that the fort was in a respectable state of defence, and not hoping to carry it so promptly, they returned, the day following, to *Ile aux Noix*, where they resolved to wait for reenforcements and

artillery. Meanwhile, to interrupt the communication for the ships of governor Carleton from fort St. John with the lake, they obstructed the channel of the river, here very narrow, with a chevaux-de-frise.

General Schuyler had returned to Albany, in order to terminate the treaty with the Indians, and to accelerate the arrival of succours at Ile aux Noix. But affairs, and a severe malady, detained him in that city; and thus the entire conduct of the Canadian expedition passed into the hands of general Montgomery, an officer endowed with all the capacity desirable. He endeavored, in the first place, to detach the Indians from the party of the English, and to engage them to remain neuter; he succeeded in this point, without much difficulty. Then, after the arrival of his reinforcements and artillery, he undertook the siege of fort St. John. The garrison consisted in five or six hundred regular soldiers, with two hundred Canadians, under the command of major Preston; but the army of Canada, as well as all the others of the confederation, wanted powder and cannon balls, and therefore the siege made little progress. The defect of discipline among the provincial troops created a difficulty no less alarming. Montgomery opposed it with patience, with promises, with menaces, and especially with his magnanimity and the authority of his person, which was very great among all. Fortune soon offered him the means of remedying the deficiency of ammunition. A little below fort St. John, and upon the same river, is situated another small fort, called Chambly. The English, believing the enemy could not arrive there, before capturing fort St. John, had neglected to arm it. The American general turned his attention to this quarter. He put in motion a strong detachment, composed of colonists and Canadians, under the command of majors Brown and Livingstone. They appeared unexpectedly before the fort, and took possession of it. The garrison, a mere handful, were made prisoners. A few pieces of cannon, with an hundred and twenty-four barrels of powder were thus obtained. The colors conquered from the English were solemnly sent to Congress. The Americans, now provided with the necessary munitions, pressed with vigor the siege of St. John. They established a battery, at two and fifty paces from the fort.

Several detachments of Americans scoured the country between the river Sorel and that of St. Lawrence. They were received with great demonstrations of joy by the Canadians, who came in throngs to join them, bringing arms, ammunition, and provisions. Their spirit increased with their number. Colonel Allen and major Brown, both officers of real talent, concerted the project of surprising the city of Montreal, the capital of Upper Canada, and situated in an island formed by two branches of the St. Lawrence. Colonel Allen having reached Longueville, found boats, and crossed the river, during the night, below Montreal. Major Brown was to have



passed over at the same time ; but, not having been able to effect it, the first division found itself in a critical position. Governor Carleton, who was then at Montreal, having discovered the weakness of colonel Allen, and knowing how to make his profit of occasion, marched out to meet him, with a few hundred men, among English, Canadians, and savages. A fierce action ensued, and the Americans defended themselves with bravery ; but, overpowered at length by numbers, having lost many of his men, and abandoned by the others, especially by the Canadians, colonel Allen was forced to surrender. The governor would not observe towards him the laws of war ; but caused him to be loaded with irons, and sent him to England.

Flushed with this success, he resolved, by a vigorous effort, to raise the siege of fort St. John. He assembled what regular troops he had, and a considerable number of Canadians and Indians ; but still not believing his means sufficient, he departed from Montreal, in order to join colonel Maclean, who, with the Scotch regiment of Royal Highlanders, occupied the mouth of the Sorel, near its confluence with the St. Lawrence. He hoped, with these forces united, to be in a situation to attack general Montgomery, and compel him to raise the siege. But fortune was not favorable to his design. The American general, foreseeing that a man so active as governor Carleton would assuredly not remain idle, had taken care to scour continually, with numerous detachments, the eastern bank of the right branch of the St. Lawrence.

The English, having completed their preparations, entered their boats, to pass the river, and land upon the opposite side, at Longueville. The American colonel Warner, having perceived their design, planted artillery on the bank of the river, and stood ready to repulse the enemy with musketry. He suffered the boats of the governor to approach ; and, when they were within reach, poured into them several discharges of grape-shot. The English, surprised at this unexpected reception, retired in the greatest disorder, and relanded upon the other bank of the river, at Montreal. Colonel Maclean, informed of the check at Longueville, fell back upon Quebec, abandoning to the Americans the mouth of the Sorel.

Meanwhile, the siege of fort St. John was pushed with greater ardor. General Montgomery had already approached with his trenches to the foot of the wall, and was preparing to give the assault. But the besieged defended themselves valiantly, and appeared resolved to hold out to the last, notwithstanding their provisions were nearly exhausted. At length, the American general having received the news of the governor's defeat, sent into the place a flag, accompanied by one of the prisoners of colonel Warner. In the letter he addressed to major Preston, informing him of this event, he exhorted him not to persist in an obstinate defence, the only result of which would be an useless effusion of blood. Preston at

first hesitated, and demanded an armistice of some days. But the American could not consent to consume time unprofitably ; the season being already much advanced. The Englishman was consequently compelled to surrender, the 3d of November, after a siege of six weeks. He obtained the honors of war, and guaranty of persons and property. The prisoners were conducted, by the way of Ticonderoga, into the colonies that were deemed the most proper. Thus fell into the power of the Americans the fortress of St. John, which, since the loss of Ticonderoga and of Crown Point, was justly considered as the key of Canada. They found in it seventeen pieces of brass cannon, twenty-two of iron, seven mortars, with a considerable quantity of balls and bombs, and of naval stores ; the munitions of war and provisions had been almost entirely consumed.

Masters of this important place, the Americans hastened to occupy the mouths of the Sorel, and the point of land which this river forms in its junction with the St. Lawrence. This operation was of the utmost interest, in order to prevent the armed vessels, which the governor had assembled at Montreal, from descending the river, and escaping to Quebec. It was hoped, besides, that the governor himself might have to surrender ; he being then at Montreal, an open city, and incapable of any defence. Accordingly, the provincials erected batteries upon this point ; and, as the river is here very wide, they constructed, with extreme activity, a number of rafts and floating batteries ; and thus not only prevented the governor from descending the river, but even compelled him, by a furious attack, to retire towards Montreal. All this squadron, and the governor in person, had a very narrow escape.

General Montgomery arrived under the walls of Montreal, the day after general Carleton had joined his ships and left it. The inhabitants immediately proposed many articles of capitulation ; but the American general refused to accept them, alleging, that, not being in a state of defence, they could not make terms. He summoned them, therefore, to surrender at discretion ; but, humane as well as brave, and possessed of all the civil virtues that can honor an individual, he regulated himself for the inhabitants all the conditions they could have wished, promising them, with a writing from his own hand, that he would protect their persons, their property, and their religion. In anticipation of their adhesion to the American Union, he added, that he hoped the civil and religious rights of all the Canadians would be unalterably fixed by the provincial Congress, and that the courts of justice would be organised after the principles of the English constitution. He subscribed, generally, to all the propositions that were compatible with the security of his army, and the success of his ulterior designs. This conduct of general Montgomery was dictated not only by his own character, which was truly noble and generous, but also by his desire to reassure the inhabitants

of other parts of Canada, and particularly of Quebec, to the end, that, banishing all fear, and putting their confidence in his fortune and his fidelity, they might espouse the cause of America. Having thus satisfied the inhabitants of Montreal, he entered the city, on the 13th of November.

The troops of Montgomery, generally but ill equipped, were greatly annoyed by the cold of the season, which in that climate began to be very severe. Especially in their march from St. John to Montreal, the lands being continually low and marshy, they encountered innumerable difficulties, which only an incredible constancy enabled them to surmount. Arrived at Montreal, some murmurs began to escape them; and the greater part of the soldiers, whose term of service had expired, were inclined to return to their homes; but general Montgomery, by his words, by the influence he had over them, and by a distribution of woollen clothing he had bought in the city, retained a part of the discontented; the others abandoned the army, and caused it to experience a diminution the more sensible, as it was already none too large. But, the more obstacles multiplied, the more kindled the elastic genius of the intrepid Montgomery.

The taking of Montreal by the provincials entirely paralyzed the naval apparatus of the governor. He found himself blockaded, in the part of the river St. Lawrence which is comprehended between the city and the mouth of the river Sorel. Below this point, the passage was interdicted him, by the floating batteries and rafts, armed with artillery, under the command of colonel Easton. The taking of the governor himself appeared inevitable; which was to be considered as the decision of the war of Canada, as the pledge of the conquest of the capital, and of the entire province. Its fate depended absolutely upon the presence of this chief, whose courage and prudence presided over all. In a position so perilous, he found the way to escape, and at the very instant when his ruin appeared impending. He threw himself into a boat; and, having caused the oars to be muffled, to diminish the noise, he had the good fortune to pass, favored by the obscurity of the night, through the guard boats of the enemy, and to arrive sound and safe at Quebec. General Prescott, who after the departure of the governor, had taken command of the squadron, was forced to surrender.

With him fell into the power of the provincials many other officers, several members of the civil administrations of Canada, the volunteers of this province, and a corps of English soldiers; all of whom had taken refuge on board the ships, when general Montgomery was on the eve of arriving at Montreal. Having left a garrison in Montreal, as also in the forts of St. John and Chambly, to keep open a communication between Quebec and the colonies, to secure the submission of the Canadians, and to overawe the Indians, as well as the garrisons of Detroit and Niagara, he marched towards Quebec, with a



corps of little more than three hundred men, the sole residue of all the army.

While these events passed in the upper part of Canada, the city of Quebec was itself menaced, from an unexpected quarter, with a most imminent peril.

Washington, in his camp near Boston, had conceived an enterprise as surprising for its novelty as terrific for the obstacles and dangers which it presented in the execution ; but if it was hazardous, it was no less useful. He thought there must exist a way, which, though unfrequented, and known only by the mountaineers in the mild season, led from the upper parts of New Hampshire and the province of Maine, across deserts, marshes, woods, and almost inaccessible mountains, into Lower Canada, on the part of Quebec. He calculated that an attack directed against this point, would produce the greater effect, as it would be the more unexpected ; for not only no army was ever known to pass through these rough and dismal solitudes, but never had human being, until then, even imagined it was possible. Washington knew, besides, that the city of Quebec was by no means in a state of defence. His plan coincided perfectly with that part of the army which was to penetrate into Upper Canada by way of the lakes and the river Sorel. It was known how insufficient were the forces of governor Carleton, who, compelled to divide them, could not hope to resist two corps that should attack him simultaneously, the one towards Montreal, the other towards Quebec. If he persisted in defending the part contiguous to the first of these cities, the second fell into the hands of the Americans ; if, on the contrary, he marched to the succour of Quebec, Montreal and all the adjacent country could not escape them.

The command of this adventurous enterprise was confided to colonel Arnold, a man even more rash than audacious, of a genius fertile in resources, and of a firmness not to be shaken. There were selected, to follow him, ten companies of fusileers, three of riflemen, and one of artillery, under the orders of captain Lamb. A few volunteers joined them, among whom was colonel Burr, who afterwards became vice-president of the United States. The corps amounted in all to eleven hundred men. The province of Maine is traversed by a river called the Kennebec, which takes its source in the mountains that separate this province from Canada, and, running from north to south, falls into the sea, not far from Casco bay. Opposite the sources of the Kennebec, on the other side of the mountains, rises another river, named the Chaudiere, which goes to empty itself into the St. Lawrence, a little above the city of Quebec. In going from one of these sources to the other, it is necessary to pass steep mountains, interrupted by frequent torrents and marshes. No living being is found in all this space. Such is the route colonel Arnold was to take, in order to arrive at Quebec.

He had received instructions to endeavor to correspond with the army of Upper Canada, by means of the Indians of St. Francis, who inhabit the banks of a river of this name, situated between the Chaudiere and the Sorel. He was also to employ all possible means to conciliate the friendship of the Canadians, and to inform general Washington of whatever should happen to him, from day to day. He carried with him six thousand pounds sterling, and proclamations in abundance; they were used then with the same prodigality that they have been since.

All the preparations being completed, and the troops appearing animated with extreme ardor, colonel Arnold departed from the camp of Boston about the middle of September, and arrived at Newburyport, situated at the mouth of the Merrimac.

The vessels that waited for him there, conveyed him to the mouths of the Kennebec. The wind being favorable, he entered the river, and found two hundred batteaux in preparation, at the town of Gardiner. Having laden them with his arms, ammunition, and provisions, he thus proceeded up the river to fort Wester, situated upon the right bank. Here he divided his corps into three detachments; the first, composed of riflemen, and commanded by captain Morgan, formed the vanguard, to explore the country, sound the fords, prepare the ways, and especially to reconnoitre what the Americans denominate *portages*. These portages are places where, the rivers ceasing to be navigable, it becomes necessary to carry by hand or sumpter, all the lading of the batteaux, and finally the boats themselves, until the streams become navigable anew. The second detachment marched the day following, and the third, the day after that. The current was rapid, the bed of the river rocky, and often interrupted by falls and other impediments. It happened at every instant, that the water entered the batteaux, and damaged or drowned the provisions and ammunition. At every portage, and they were encountered continually, the boats were to be unladen, and transported upon shoulders, to a navigable place. The way upon land offered difficulties no less formidable than this of the water. It was necessary to penetrate through thickest forests, to scale frightful mountains, to wade through quagmires, and traverse horrible precipices. The soldiers, while hewing a way through so many obstacles, were forced to carry all their baggage; and accordingly they advanced but very slowly. Provisions began to fail them before they arrived at the sources of the Kennebec. They found themselves constrained to eat their dogs, and even aliments still more strange. Numbers, wasted by continual fatigues and hardships, were attacked with maladies. As soon as they reached the source of Dead river, which is a branch of the Kennebec, colonel Enos received orders to send back all the sick, and all those to whom it was not possible to furnish provisions. But this officer, embracing the occasion, returned with all his detachment

to the camp at Boston. All the army, on seeing him appear, were transported with indignation against a man who had abandoned his own companions, in the midst of danger, and whose desertion might occasion the miscarriage of the whole enterprise. He was brought before a court martial, but acquitted, in consequence of the acknowledged impossibility of procuring sustenance in these wild and desert places.

Meanwhile, colonel Arnold pursued his march, with the two first divisions. He had employed thirty-two days in traversing fearful solitudes, without perceiving a single habitation, a single human face. Marshes, mountains, precipices, were encountered at every step, and appeared to cut off all hope of success, or rather all hope of safety. Death was to all more an object of desire than of fear; their toils, their hardships, their sufferings, had no end. Their constancy, however, did not desert them; the law of necessity seemed to sustain their energies. Arrived upon the summit of the mountains that separate the waters of the Kennebec from those of the Chaudiere and of the river St. Lawrence, the feeble relics of food that still were found were divided equally among all the companies. Arnold said to his soldiers, they must now push forward to seek subsistence, since they had no other resource, no other chance of preservation. As to himself he was to be seen every where, reconnoitring the places, and searching for some means to escape famine. The companies were still thirty miles distant from any inhabited place, when it was found that every species of subsistence was consumed to the last morsel. Despair became general; all at once, Arnold appeared, and brought with him wherewith to satisfy the first wants of nature. They resumed their march; and at length discovered, with inconceivable joy, the sources of the Chaudiere, and, soon after, the first habitations of the Canadians. These showed themselves heartily well disposed towards the Congress, and offered the Americans all the succours that were in their power. Arnold, who was impatient to reap the fruits of so many toils and of so many perils, would wait no longer than was necessary for the rear guard to come up, and to assemble the scattered soldiers. He then gave out a proclamation of general Washington. It was drawn up in the same style as those of generals Schuyler and Montgomery. The Canadians were exhorted to enter into the confederacy, and resort to the banners of general liberty; they were told, that the colonists came not to oppress or despoil them, but, on the contrary, to protect persons and property, in a country they considered friendly; 'Let them remain, therefore, in their dwellings; let them not fly from their friends; let them furnish the troops with all the necessaries in their power, for which they might depend upon full payment.'

Arnold continued his march, and arrived, the 9th of November, at a place named *Point Levy*, situated opposite to Quebec, upon the



right bank of the river St. Lawrence. It is easy to imagine the stupor of surprise which seized the inhabitants of Quebec, at the apparition of these troops. They could not comprehend by what way, or in what mode, they had transported themselves into this region. This enterprise appeared to them not merely marvellous, but miraculous; and if Arnold, in this first moment, had been able to cross the river, and fall upon Quebec, he would have taken it without difficulty. But colonel Maclean had been seasonably apprised of the approach of the Americans, by a letter, which Arnold, being still at the sources of the Kennebec, had confided to an Indian of St. Francis, to deliver to general Schuyler, and which this savage had suffered to be taken from him, or perhaps had voluntarily given up. The English had consequently withdrawn all the batteaux from the right bank to the other side of the river. In addition to which, the wind this day blew so violently, that it would have been impossible to cross the river without manifest danger. These two circumstances saved the city. Arnold was forced to lose several days; and he could have no hope of being able to pass, except in the night, the river being guarded by the frigate *Lizard* and several smaller armed vessels, that were anchored under the walls of the city. But, during many successive nights, the wind was even more impetuous than by day. Meanwhile, the Canadians had furnished Arnold with batteaux; and he waited only for a fit time to attempt the passage.

The commander of Quebec found himself provided with few means to defend the city. The spirit that prevailed among the inhabitants could not fail to alarm him; and the garrison was very feeble. The merchants and English were much dissatisfied with the French laws, which had recently been introduced into the province, and the little regard shown by the government for their petitions. They complained, that all favors, that all privileges, were reserved for the French inhabitants; and that the desire to win the benevolence of these enemies, had caused the government to despise friends. 'These Frenchmen,' they said, 'elated with pride by so many attentions, incessantly insult and outrage the English. Even in private circles, these zealous subjects are forward to discourse upon affairs of state, in order to sound the opinion of those that hear them, and afterwards to go and report their words to persons in authority. Thus the liberty enjoyed by the English in their actions and speech, is transformed into symptoms of disaffection, disloyalty, and sinister designs.' The English citizens also manifested an extreme disgust at the license of the soldiery, and as the conduct of the governor, who had left the city without garrison, when the troops had been sent against the insurgents in the part of the Sorel and of Montreal, without even having taken the precaution to organise the companies of militia. It appeared, also, that little reliance could be placed in the fidelity of the French, the greater part of whom were wavering, and some even declared

enemies to British domination. On the other hand, the garrison was extremely feeble ; it only consisted in the companies of Royal Irish, under colonel Maclean, and in a few militia, finally assembled in haste by the lieutenant-governor. The council of naval officers had not permitted the sailors to be landed to serve on shore, as well on account of the season, now far advanced, as of the difficulties of the navigation.

But when the American colors were seen floating on the other side of the river, all the citizens, soldiers or not soldiers, landsmen or seamen, English or French, united by common danger, and fearing for their effects, which were very considerable, hastened with emulation to the defence of the city ; and exerted the utmost activity, in order to make all necessary preparations, before the enemy could pass the river. The companies of militia were armed, and stationed at their posts. The Royal Irish manifested the greatest resolution. The marines were put on shore, who, accustomed to the management of cannon, were destined to serve the artillery of the ramparts. The ardor of colonel Maclean was of great benefit, in this first approach of perils ; he neglected nothing to inspire all minds with firmness, and to assemble whatever might contribute to the defence of the city.

Finally, the wind being moderated, and Arnold having made his arrangements, in order to pass the river, and attack the city, he appointed the night of the 13th of November for the execution of his designs. He embarked all his men, with the exception of one hundred and fifty, who remained to complete the requisite number of ladders. Notwithstanding the extreme rapidity of the current, and all the pains it was necessary to take in order to avoid the ships of the enemy, he reached the left bank, a little above the place where general Wolfe had landed in 1759, under auspices so happy for his country, and so fatal to himself. Unable to scale the banks of the river, which are very steep at this point, he descended towards Quebec, always marching upon the margin of the river, until he was come to the foot of the same precipice which general Wolfe had found so much difficulty in surmounting. Followed by his intrepid companions, he mounted to its summit, and drew up his little band upon the heights near the plain of Abraham. Here he waited for them to recover breath, and to give time for the companies left on the other side of the St. Lawrence to join him. He had hoped to surprise the city, and to carry it by a single effort. But the notice given by the intercepted letter, the appearance he had made at Point Levy, and the encounter of a boat that was passing from the port of Quebec to the frigate, had given the alarm, and apprised the whole city of the danger ready to burst upon them ; accordingly, all were at their posts. It was not long before Arnold had full assurance of it ; for, having sent forward the companies of riflemen to reconnoitre the places, and the position of the enemy, they reported, on their return, that they had

encountered advanced guards, who had given the alert. The colonel was nevertheless disposed to order the attack; but the other officers endeavored to dissuade him from it. The greater part of the muskets were become, by the accidents of a long march, unfit for service. So great a part of the ammunition had perished, that there no longer remained more than six charges to each soldier. Finally, the provincials had not a single piece of cannon. But, if Arnold had lost the hope of taking Quebec by storm, he had not renounced that of exciting within it a movement in his favor, and causing its gates to be opened to him, by showing himself in arms under its walls. Accordingly, he displayed himself frequently upon the heights; and even sent a flag, summoning the town to surrender. But all was in vain. Colonel Maclean, who commanded during the absence of the governor, not only refused to admit the message, but ordered his men to fire upon the bearers. Arnold was informed, at the same time, that the soldiers who had escaped from the discomfiture of Montreal, were coming down the river, and that colonel Maclean was preparing to make a sally.

Finding himself, therefore, constrained to retire, he went to encamp at a place called *Point au Tremble*, twenty miles above Quebec, to await the arrival of Montgomery, who was expected from Upper Canada. He perceived, during his march, the ship in which governor Carleton was proceeding to Quebec. When arrived at *Point au Tremble*, he learned that this general had stopped there, a few hours before; so uncertain are the events of war—so singular are the chances on which often depends the fate of nations!

The governor arrived, therefore, without accident, at Quebec. He immediately set about taking all the measures of defence which the pressure of time, and the difficulty of circumstances, could allow him. He sent out of the city, with their families, all those who refused to take arms. The garrison, inclusive of the militia, amounted only to about fifteen hundred men, a number much inferior to what would have been necessary to guard suitably all the fortifications, which were extensive and multiplied; and even of this number, the proportion of regular soldiers was very inconsiderable. The companies organised by colonel Maclean were composed of new levies; and one company of the seventh regiment were all recruits. The rest was a medley of militia, French and English, of some few marines, of sailors belonging to the frigates of the king, or to the merchant vessels that wintered in the port. These seamen constituted the principal force of the garrison; for they at least knew how to serve the artillery.

In the meantime, general Montgomery, having left garrisons in the fortresses of Upper Canada, and secured the favorable dispositions of the inhabitants of the parts adjacent, commenced his march towards Quebec. The season was extremely severe; it being about



the beginning of December ; the roads, obstructed with snow, were almost impassable. The Americans, however, supported so many hardships with singular fortitude. It was owing principally to the prudence and firmness of Montgomery, qualities which gave him a powerful influence over his soldiers. This multitude, snatched from pacific occupations, had been all at once employed in the most arduous toils of war, in the midst of the most rigorous season of the year. Every one sees how difficult it is to introduce subordination among men of such a sort ; and it should even be added, that these, from their habits and opinions, were peculiarly indisposed to that obedience so essential in armies. Finally, the term of their engagement was nearly expired ; and already they exulted in the expectation of soon returning to the repose and solace of their homes.

Such were the difficulties which beset the American general. But his name, dear to all, the seduction of his eloquence, even the splendor of his person, his virtues, and the continual example he gave of resignation and magnanimity, supported the constancy of his troops under their hardships, and inspired them with new ardor to follow his steps. Certainly the march of Arnold across the horrible wilderness that separates the District of Maine from Canada, and this of Montgomery through Upper Canada ; the force of talent which enabled the two leaders to maintain discipline and good will among soldiers lately enrolled, attached with vehemence to their independence, and accustomed to act their pleasure without restraint, are enterprises which at least equal, if not surpass, the most painful, the most arduous, of all those related in history of the captains of antiquity. Such prodigies have been accomplished by armies of considerable numbers, when compared with those which have overwhelmed other parts of the world ; but ought this to diminish the glory of these intrepid men in the memory of posterity ?

Montgomery arrived, the first of December, at Point au Tremble, with a detachment not exceeding, if it amounted to, three hundred men. Here colonel Arnold advanced to receive him ; the joy of the two corps, at this meeting, cannot be described. Montgomery had brought clothing for the soldiers of Arnold, who stood in the most urgent want of it.

They marched in company, and arrived, the fifth of December, in sight of Quebec. Their force was inferior to that of the garrison they purposed to attack. They sent to summon it by a flag. The governor ordered his troops to fire upon the bearer. Montgomery then resorted to the agency of an inhabitant, to convey another letter to the governor ; in which, after having magnified his own forces, the insufficiency of the garrison, and the impossibility of defence, he demanded an immediate surrender, threatening an assault, and all the calamities which irritated and victorious soldiers are wont to inflict upon cities taken by storm. This step was also without success ;

general Carleton, a veteran commander, was not a man to be intimidated so easily. As to the American general, considering the weakness of his means, and the immobility of the inhabitants, who made no demonstration in his favor, he cherished but faint hopes of success. Nevertheless, to abandon an enterprise in which he had engaged with so much ardor, appeared to him too unworthy of his name and valor. He was not ignorant, besides, that in the commencement of this revolution, the unfortunate issue of an expedition so agreeable to the people, and upon which they had founded such brilliant expectations, would infallibly produce a pernicious effect upon the public mind. He foresaw that, instead of ardor and confidence, it must introduce dejection and despair. He doubted even whether he should be able to preserve the part of Canada he had acquired, if the capital of the province remained in the power of the English. He had been informed, that, in the following spring, large reinforcements were to arrive from England; which would enable the enemy to expel the American troops without difficulty. Wanting forces, but not courage, Montgomery resorted to the only way that was left him; he resolved to harass and reduce the garrison, by frequent and furious attacks. He was not without hope, that he might thus find some opportunity to strike a decisive blow; this expectation was the more probable, as the garrison was far from being sufficient to guard effectually the numerous fortifications of so extensive a city. The American general accordingly attempted to throw bombs into the town, with five small mortars; hoping in this manner to excite some movement within. But the vigilance of the governor, the zeal and bravery of the officers, and especially the efforts of the seamen, prevented this siege from producing any perceptible effect.

A few days after, Montgomery planted a battery of six pieces of cannon and a howitzer, within seven hundred paces of the walls. This artillery was laid, not upon the ground, but upon banks of snow and ice; the pieces were of feeble caliber; their fire was nearly without result.

Meanwhile, the snow which fell incessantly, encumbered the earth; and the cold had become so violent, that it was beyond human nature to support it in the open field. The hardships which the Americans had to suffer from the rigor of the climate, and the fatigues to which their small number subjected them, surpass all the imagination can picture of the most severe. The attachment they bore to their cause, and the confidence which they had, the most unshaken, in their general, could only have sustained them in the midst of trials so terrible. To render their position still more dismal, the smallpox broke out in the camp; this scourge was the terror of the soldiers. It was ordered that those who were attacked with it, should wear a sprig of hemlock upon their hats, that the others might know and avoid them. But constancy in the human breast, gives place to despair, when suf-

ferings appear without end. And this extremity was the more to be feared among the provincials, as the expiration of their time of service, with the possibility of escape from so many evils, might probably create the desire. All these considerations persuaded Montgomery, that without a bold and immediate effort, he must renounce the idea of satisfying public expectation, and witness the eclipse of his own glory. In his position, even temerity became prudence, and it was better to lose life in a glorious action, than resign himself to a shame which would have been so fatal to the American arms.

Accordingly, Montgomery having determined to attempt the assault, convoked a council of war, and acquainted them with his project. Without denying that it was of difficult execution, he maintained that it was possible, and that valor and prudence would triumph over all obstacles. All were in favor of his proposition. A few companies of Arnold, dissatisfied with their commander, alone testified repugnance. But captain Morgan, a man of real merit, addressed them a persuasive discourse, and their opposition ceased. The general had already arranged in his mind the plan of the attack, and thought of all the means proper to carry it into execution. He intended it should take place, at the same time, against the upper and lower town. But understanding that a deserter had given notice of it to the governor, he resolved to divide his army into four corps, two of which, composed in great part of Canadians, under the command of majors Livingston and Brown, were to occupy the attention of the enemy by two feigned attacks of the upper town, towards St. John and Cape Diamond. The two others, led, the first by Montgomery, the second by Arnold, were reserved to assault the lower part of the town from two opposite points. The general was perfectly aware, that after he should have carried this part of Quebec, there would remain many difficulties to be surmounted in order to conquer the other. But he hoped that the inhabitants, on seeing so great a proportion of their property fallen into the power of the victors, would force the governor to capitulate.

The last day of the year, 1775, between four and five o'clock in the morning, in the midst of a heavy storm of snow, the four columns put themselves in motion, in the best order, each towards the point assigned.

It is said that captain Frazer, of the Irish emigrants, in going his round, perceived the fusees which the Americans fired to give the signal; and that, immediately, without waiting further orders, he caused the drums to beat, and roused the garrison to arms. The columns of Livingston and of Brown, impeded by the snow and other obstacles, were not in time to execute their feints. But Montgomery, at the head of his, composed chiefly of New York men, advanced upon the bank of the river, marching by the way denominated *Anse de mer*, under Cape Diamond. Here was encountered a first barrier,



at a place called Potasse, which was defended by a battery of a few pieces of cannon; further on, at the distance of two hundred paces from this, stood a redoubt, furnished with a sufficient guard. The soldiers that composed it, being the greater part Canadians, on seeing the enemy approach, were seized with terror, threw down their arms, and fled. The battery itself was abandoned; and if the Americans could have advanced with sufficient expedition, they would certainly have been masters of it. But in turning Cape Diamond, the foot of which is bathed by the waters of the river, they found the road interrupted by enormous masses of snow. Montgomery, with his own hands, endeavored to open a path for his troops who followed him, man by man; he was compelled to wait for them. At length having assembled about two hundred, whom he encouraged with voice and example, he moved courageously and rapidly towards the barrier. But in the meantime, a cannonier who had retreated from the battery, on seeing the enemy halt, returned to his post, and taking a match, which happened to be still burning, fired a cannon charged with grape-shot; the Americans were within forty paces. This single explosion totally extinguished the hopes they had conceived. Montgomery, as well as captains Macpherson and Cheesman, both young men of singular merit, and dear to the general, were killed upon the spot. The soldiers shrunk back on seeing their general fall; and colonel Campbell, on whom the command devolved, was not a man capable of executing so perilous an enterprise. The flight soon became universal; so that this part of the garrison no longer having enemies to combat, was at liberty to fly to the succour of that which was attacked by Arnold.

This colonel, who was himself at the head of the forlorn hope, marched by the way of St. Roc, towards the place called *Saut-au-Matlot*. Captain Lamb followed him with a company of artillery, and one piece of cannon; next came the main body, preceded by the riflemen under captain Morgan. The besieged had erected at the entrance of the avenue, a battery, which defended a barrier. The Americans found themselves confined within a passage obstructed by deep snow, and so commanded by the works of the enemy, that his grape-shot swept it in every direction. Meanwhile, Arnold advanced rapidly under the fire of the besieged, who manned the walls. He received a musket ball in the leg, which wounded him severely, splintering the bone. It was necessary to carry him to the hospital, almost by compulsion. Captain Morgan then took the command, and with all the impetuosity of his character, he launched himself against the battery, at the head of two companies. The artillery of the enemy continued to fire grape-shot, but with little effect.

The American riflemen, celebrated for their extreme address, killed many of the English soldiers through the embrasures. They applied ladders to the parapet; the besieged were daunted, and aban-

doned the battery to the assailants. Morgan with his companies, and a few soldiers of the centre, who were come up to the vanguard, made many prisoners, English as well as Canadians; but his situation became extremely critical. The main body had not yet been able to join him; he had no guide, and he was unacquainted with the city; he had no artillery; and the day was still far from dawning. He found himself constrained to halt; his soldiers began to reflect upon their position; their ardor cooled rapidly. The ignorance in which they were of the fate of their other columns, the obscurity of night, the snow which fell with redoubled violence, the firing of musketry which was heard on every side, and even behind them, finally, the uncertainty of the future, filled the boldest spirits with an involuntary terror. Morgan alone resisted the panic; he rallied his riflemen, promising them a certain victory. He ran to the barrier, to spur on those who had remained behind. Lieutenant-colonel Green, majors Bigelow and Meigs, joined him with their companies. The morning began to dawn, when Morgan, with a terrible voice, summoned his troops to the assault; he led on with fury against a second battery, which he knew to be only a few paces distant, though masked by an angle of the road; on turning the corner, he encountered a detachment of English, who had sallied from the battery, under the command of Captain Anderson. The latter summoned the Americans to lay down arms. Morgan levelled a musket at his head, and laid him dead upon the ground. The English then retreated within the battery, and closed the barrier. A fierce combat ensued, which cost many lives to the two parties, but most to the Americans, whose flanks were exposed to a destructive fire of musketry from the windows of the houses. Meanwhile, some of the most adventurous having rested their ladders against the palisades, appeared disposed to leap it, but on seeing two files of soldiers prepared to receive them on the points of their bayonets, they renounced this project. Cut down by a continual fire, they now sought shelter in the houses. Morgan remained almost alone, near the barrier, endeavoring in vain to recall his soldiers, and inspire them with fresh courage. Weariness, and the menacing countenance of the enemy, had disheartened the most audacious. Their arms, bathed by the snow, which continued to fall impetuously, were no longer of any use to them. Morgan then seeing the expedition frustrated, ordered the retreat to sound, in order to avoid being surrounded. But the soldiers who had taken refuge in the houses were afraid to expose themselves to the tempest of shot that must have been encountered, in gaining the corner of the avenue, where they would have been out of danger, and whence they might have retired behind the first barrier. The loss they had sustained, the fury of the storm, and the benumbing effects of the cold, had deprived them of all courage. In the meantime, a detachment of the besieged sallied out from a gate

of the palace, and captain Dearborne, who, with his company of provincials, held himself in reserve near this gate, having surrendered, the English retook all this part of the city ; consequently, Morgan saw himself encircled by enemies. He proposed to his followers, to open, with arms, the way of retreat ; but they refused in the hope that the assault given on the other part might have succeeded, and that Montgomery would soon come to their relief. They resolved to defend themselves, in the meantime ; but having at length perceived by the continually increasing multitude of enemies, the true state of things, they yielded to destiny, and laid down arms.

Such was the issue of the assault given by the Americans to the city of Quebec, in the midst of the most rigorous season of the year ; an enterprise, which, though at first view it may seem rash, was certainly not impossible. The events themselves have proved it ; for if general Montgomery had not been slain at the first onset, it is more than probable that on his part he would have carried the barrier, since even at the moment of his death the battery was abandoned, and only served by a few men ; by penetrating at this point while Arnold and Morgan obtained the same advantages in their attacks, all the lower city would have fallen into the power of the Americans. However this may be, though victory escaped them, their heroic efforts will be the object of sincere admiration. The governor, using his advantages nobly, treated the prisoners with much humanity. He caused the American general to be interred with all military honors.

The loss of this excellent officer was deeply and justly lamented by all his party. Born of a distinguished Irish family, Montgomery had entered in early youth, the career of arms ; and had served, with honor, in the preceding war between Great Britain and France. Having married an American lady, and purchased an estate in the province of New York, he was considered, and considered himself, an American. He loved glory much, and liberty yet more. Neither genius, nor valor, nor occasion, failed him ; but time and fortune. And if it is allowable, from the past actions of man to infer the future, what motives are there for believing, that if death had not taken him from his country in all the vigor of his age, he would have left it the model of military heroism and of civil virtues ! He was beloved by the good, feared by the wicked, and honored even by enemies. Nature had done all for him ; his person, from its perfection, answered to the purity of his mind. He left a wife, the object of all his tenderness, with several children, still infants ;—a spectacle for their country, at once of pity and of admiration ! The state, from gratitude towards their father, distinguished them with every mark of kindness and protection.\* Thus died this man—whose name,

\* The author was misinformed with respect to this fact ; the widow of general Montgomery never had any children.



ever pronounced with enthusiasm by his own, has never ceased to be respected by the warmest of the opposite party ; marvellous eulogium, and almost without example !

General Carleton still added to his reputation for prudence and intrepidity, in having maintained, under circumstances of such difficulty, both order and union, among soldiers assembled in haste, and altogether strangers to discipline. If, with means so feeble, he was able to repulse the formidable attacks of an enemy rendered more terrible by despair, he acquired an honor not inferior by the generosity with which he used victory.

Arnold, who, after the death of Montgomery, had taken the command of the troops, not thinking himself in safety under the walls of the city, extended his camp, with the intention of converting the siege into a blockade. He retired to a distance of three miles from the town ; and intrenched himself, as well as the season, the want of all necessary articles, and the shortness of time, would admit of. Though still suffering much from his wound, he was vigilant to scour the country, and to intercept the provisions that were conducted to the city. The governor, on his part, satisfied with seeing the return of tranquillity for the present, and trusting in the hope of succours already announced, would not, by a second trial of fortune, expose himself to hazard the glory he had acquired, the fate of the province, and perhaps that of all the war. He therefore remained peaceably within the walls of the city, waiting for the favorable season, and reinforcements from England.

Thus terminated, in America, the year 1775, to give place to the subsequent, teeming with actions no less glorious, and events no less memorable.

END OF BOOK FIFTH.

## BOOK SIXTH.

1775. THE general attention in England was now turned upon the great spectacle presented by the Americans, and their resistance rekindled the animosity of the different parties. It had been hoped, and the ministers themselves had confidently affirmed, that the late laws, and especially the troops recently despatched to the colonies, would promptly suppress sedition and reduce the factious to obedience. It was not doubted that the partisans of the royal cause, encouraged by the presence of soldiers, and desirous to avoid the vengeance of the laws, would display great energy, and separate themselves from the insurgents, to join the troops of the king, and reestablish the authority of government. It was also firmly believed that the southern provinces, on seeing the storm ready to burst upon their heads, would never espouse the quarrel of the provinces of the north; and it appeared infallibly certain that the dissensions which alienated the one from the other, would bring about the submission of all. But these hopes having proved entirely deceitful, a general discontent succeeded them, and on all parts the conduct of ministers was censured with asperity. It was deemed intolerable that the soldiers of the king, instead of victoriously keeping the field, should shamefully languish behind the walls of a city without daring to show themselves. The popular movements, which at first were only partial, now extended over the whole continent. The governors in the room of reestablishing the royal authority, were forced to fly from their posts and take refuge on board of ships.

The Americans, heretofore represented as trembling, and ready to humble themselves, were daily acquiring new audacity, and a more formidable energy in resistance. The members of parliament who had combated the influence of ministers, repeated, with loud cries, 'that such were the necessary fruits of their incapacity, of their infatuated obstinacy.' 'Since they have not been willing, it was said, to grant the colonists the peace they implored, they ought, at least, to have made war upon them with sufficient forces; they have done too much to irritate, too little to subdue. Instead of surprising their adversaries before they could have furnished themselves with means of defence, they have given them a long warning, as if they wished to see them duly prepared; they have chosen to stake the entire fortune of the colonies, and brought into play only a part of their forces; they have dishonored the British nation not only with the Americans but among all the nations of the world; they have sullied it with the name of cruel, without having veiled the stigma with the lustre of victory. But we rejoice indeed, and greatly rejoice, to see thus defeated to their utter shame all the projects of the ministers

against America. They will perceive, at length, that it is not so easy to establish tyranny in the British empire, as they had presumed in their blind rage to conceive. With a satisfaction not less sincere, do we behold that opposition, so worthy to be admired by all good men, and by all the friends of liberty, which has resulted in the wreck of these Scotch machinations, of this policy of the Stuarts, first attempted in America, but intended eventually for England. We are cheered by the happy augury ; and we no longer despair of the public safety, whatever may be the pernicious plots of profligate ministers.'

'We have believed, answered the ministers, that the ways of meekness in this commencement of troubles, were most agreeable to the spirit of our laws, and of our national character ; that clemency and forbearance ought to form the basis of the conduct of the British government towards its subjects. The ministers have been accused so many times, and upon grounds so frivolous, of wishing to introduce a system of despotism, that in the present occasion they have been very circumspect to keep themselves aloof from all suspicion of a similar desire. What would their adversaries have said, if at the beginning of disturbances they had hurried to arms ; if they had sent formidable armies to America, and consigned it to fire and blood ? Then would they have raised the voice against tyranny ; we have not done it, and their clamors are the same. What have we left then but to despise them ? For is it not demonstrated, that not the love of liberty, but ambition, not the desire of justice, but that of baffling the ministers, have been the motives of their conduct ? Before proceeding to the last extremities, our duty was to allow time for reflection and repentance ; for only incurable evils are to be treated with fire and sword.

'We have borne for a long time, it is true, the effervescence of the Americans ; but we should hope that this long suffering would persuade them of the maternal sentiments of our common country that has endured outrages with magnanimity, which it might have punished at a single blow. The colonists themselves have no doubt of this ; they must know the immense superiority of the forces of England. The measures of the government would have opened their eyes already, if they were not continually deceived, excited, and misled by chiefs in delirium, here as well as there, by the cries of an imprudent opposition. But it will soon be seen in earnest, by the vigorous resolutions of government, and the energetic employment it is about to make of all its forces, that it will no more be wanting to itself than forgetful of what is due to the honor of the crown and the interests of the country.

'The Americans have no more indulgence to expect on our part. They are no longer to be looked upon as British subjects, but as implacable enemies. With as much confidence as justice, we can



henceforth overwhelm them with the formidable arm of Great Britain.' Such were the answers of the ministers to the imputations of their adversaries. These excuses might have been valid, if the ministry had not assailed the Americans with laws far more irritating than open force. For armies, though victorious, may be resisted with glory; but the patience that must tolerate oppression, is without this illusion.

Far from abating with time, these intestine dissensions appeared every day to acquire new activity. The more necessary a consent of opinions became to avert the perils that menaced the country, the more they were divided and marshalled in opposition by the spirit of party. This internal fermentation was of an augury the more fatal, inasmuch as it brought to mind those ancient and sanguinary quarrels which raged in the time of Queen Anne with so much peril to England, between the republicans and the royalists, under the names of whigs and tories. The friends and the enemies to the cause of America manifested the same animosity, and the same obstinacy; and there was much appearance that not only America, but England itself, was on the point of breaking out into open discord and civil war.

'The tories,' it was said on one side, 'are themselves the authors of the frequent addresses to the king and parliament, urging that the continent of America should be put to all that fire and sword can inflict; these are the false reporters, these the incendiaries of discord. Bigotted as they are, and infatuated in the maxims of the house of Stuart, neither the example of the evils they have brought upon England, nor the total ruin of this family, which they caused, can illuminate their obstinate minds, and induce them to renounce the cruel principles of tyranny. The bitter fate of the father is not sufficient to divert an obstinate son from pursuing the dangerous path which led him to destruction; such are all the tories. They sacrifice their rank, their fortune, their existence, to their prejudices and thirst of domination. When the inauspicious reign of the Stuarts had visited our island with foreign servitude and civil war, then the tories, trampling upon national honor and public felicity, abandoned themselves to joy. Their maxims coincide with those of the absolute princes of Europe, and they would not blush to place their country in such hands if, in so doing, their ambition might receive a new support. All the countries of Europe are subject to sovereigns whose power is without limits. England alone, by the special favor of Providence, enjoys a moderate and free government; but the tories would fain subvert it to establish the uniformity of despotism throughout all European countries. Their hearts are contaminated with all the vices of proud, perfidious, and profligate courts; with their infected breath they propagate them, like a pestilence, over the whole nation. They esteem no man but for his baseness; they

honor none but the proud and the arrogant. Their superiors they flatter, their inferiors they oppress; the prosperous they envy, the unfortunate they rarely succour, and never but from vain glory. The public felicity becomes in their hands the instrument of slavery, and our submission they deem far more essential than our prosperity. The sovereign good they place in absolute dominion; and the best possible state of society they believe to consist in mute servitude. Revolutions they applaud when they conduct a people to tyranny; they deplore their mischiefs with a hypocritical pity, they exaggerate them with the gloss of words, when liberty is to be their fruit. The argument of public tranquillity is always upon their lips; but when were they ever heard to speak of the abuses of arbitrary power, of consuming taxes, of the vexations of the powerful, of injuries without reparations, and of outrages without redress? If they are now opposed to the cause of the Americans, it is because it clashes with their plan of attack against the happy free government of our country, and their schemes for introducing into the very heart of the kingdom the laws of Charles and of James. They flatter themselves, that after having strangled the germs of liberty in America, and vanquished those generous spirits, victorious troops will also know how to bend our necks to the same cruel yoke. Such are the thoughts, such the desires that agitate them without intermission, and not the wish to see the return of peace upon that unfortunate continent where they have themselves kindled the flames of war. Let us then prevent such fatal designs, let us preserve in its integrity the inheritance which our ancestors, thanks to their valor, to their generosity, and to the magnanimous enterprises of the great William III. have handed down to us. Thus shall we serve our country, and perhaps even the house of Brunswick, which cannot without danger show itself ungrateful towards the friends of liberty, nor depart with safety from those maxims which have raised it to the British throne.'

The tories answered these declamations with no little warmth. 'It ill becomes the whigs,' they said, 'to tax us with cruelty and arrogance, since no one is ignorant what their conduct was, when, in the time of the commonwealth, and even under the monarchy, they had the supreme power in their hands; then did exile, confiscations and scaffolds spread desolation and ruin over our unhappy country; then prisons and chains were the instruments of popular clemency! If a generous prince had not arrested their career of anarchy and blood, if he had not substituted, by the aid of all good citizens, a system of liberty, so dear to the tories, England would have seen her last hour, and fallen a prey to foreign enemies. But, what is, in fact, our desire? That in every affair which interests the nation, that in every controversy which divides it, there should be a supreme authority to regulate and to determine them irrevocably; and this authority, we believe, to reside in the king, united with the

parliament. But the republicans will not submit to the laws of this legitimate authority, but are in chase of nobody knows what popular authority, which they pretend to consist in the universality of the citizens, as if a tumultuary, ignorant, and partial multitude, should or could judge of objects wherein the eyes even of the most enlightened and prudent discover the greatest difficulties.'

'A way must, however, be found to terminate national dissensions; are they to be referred to the decision of a populace ever more apt to be misled by daring and profligate demagogues, than to be guided by men of prudence and of virtue; of a rabble that hunger itself puts in the power of the first intriguer? For this purpose kings and the parliament have been instituted; it is for this end that, in the ordinary direction of affairs, as well as in unforeseen and difficult cases, they provide, and watch that the country should experience no detriment.'

'In the present dispute with America, have the ministers acted singly and of their own motion? The king and the parliament have decreed, have approved all their measures; this consideration ought to have great weight with every man who is a friend to public authority, and to the principles of the constitution. But the whigs are gasping for the moment to arrive when England, as well as America, shall be a prey to an unbridled multitude, in order to be able to enrich themselves by plunder, to gratify their insatiable ambition, and to operate the total subversion of this free government. These pretended patriots are the sons and representatives of the republicans who desolated the kingdom in the last century. They din the name of liberty continually in our ears, because they desire themselves to exercise tyranny. Under the pretext of the public safety they violate and trample under foot every form, every civil institution; they arrogate to themselves all the plenitude of arbitrary power. If they manifest an utter contempt for the laws which are the protectors of persons, of property, and of honor, their cruelty is not less conspicuous; for an opinion, whether real or supposed, or maliciously imputed, for a suspicion, for a chimera, they fly into a rage, they rush to persecutions; they plunge into misery the fathers of families, the fathers of the country, the best, the most useful, the most respectable citizens. They fawn upon the people so long as they are the weaker; but once become the stronger, they crush them, they decimate them, they starve them, and adding derision to barbarity, they never cease to protest they do it all to render them happy. These friends of liberty are perpetually declaiming against the vices of courts, as if pillage, both public and private, the scandalous profusion of ill gotten wealth, the turpitude of debauch, the violation of the marriage bed, the infamous price extorted from faithful wives to redeem their husbands' blood, the public triumph of courtesans, the baseness of cringing to the vilest of men, as if all the horrors which have signalised the reign of these republicans



were good and laudable customs ! But whatever be the plots, the wishes, and the hopes of this turbulent race of men, of these partisans of lawless licentiousness, which they attempt in vain to invest with the name of liberty, let them rest assured it is firmly resolved to resist them, to preserve the public tranquillity, to secure to the laws that obedience which is their due, and to carry into execution against the rebellious Americans, those acts which have solemnly emanated from the royal authority, and from that of the parliament. The force of circumstances, the royalty of the people, and the recollection of the past tyranny of pretended patriots, will cause all their vociferations, all their manœuvres, all their incendiary attempts, to avail them nothing. As for the rest, the tories, and not their adversaries, are the real friends of liberty ; for liberty consists not in calling the populace at every moment to intervene in the direction of state affairs, but in faithfully obeying those fundamental statutes, which are the result of the general will of the nation, and which balance and temper the royal authority by the authority of the people.'

With such animosity, with such reciprocal bitterness, the two political parties assailed each other. It appeared inevitable that this must soon lead to some violent convulsion, and all prudent men were seized with anxious apprehensions. And here, perhaps, is the place to remark how remote are human minds from all moderation, from all sense of decency, when once under the control of party zeal. Assuredly, if at the different epochs of the domination of the royalists and of the republicans, the one party and the other abandoned themselves to culpable excesses, it is not that there were not amongst them men of rectitude, who, if they judged ill, yet meant well ; with such, every form of government would be good, provided it was not purely despotic. But the ambitious, a race unfortunately so prolific, are the most fatal scourge in every well constituted state ; always in opposition with the laws of their country, they shake off their restraint the first moment they can, and thus pave the way to revolutions and the reign of arbitrary power. The legislator, who is desirous to found a government upon a solid basis, should pay less attention to forms, whether monarchical or republican, than to the establishment of laws calculated to repress the ambitious. It is not for us to pronounce whether such laws have ever yet existed, or whether they could accomplish the end proposed ; but we may confidently affirm, that men of moderation are not to be blamed for desiring either a royalty or a republic ; the ambitious alone are to be feared and detested, for they are those who cause monarchies to degenerate into tyrannical despotism, and republics into anarchy, more tyrannical still.

Such was the general agitation in England, when it was increased by the declaration of lord Dartmouth, one of the secretaries of

state, to Penn and Lee, who had brought the petition of congress addressed to the king, that no answer would be given to it. The partisans of the Americans expressed their indignation without reserve ; they censured with new asperity the impolitic obstinacy of the ministers. The latter had defenders who answered ;

‘It is time to act ; the nation has conceived great hopes ; all Europe is in suspense to see what will be the fruit of our tardy resolutions, and the result of our preparations. It is necessary to strike home, and push with vigor this war which Great Britain, with a patience unexampled, has wished to avoid ; but to which insolent and contumacious subjects have defied and provoked her by too many outrages.’

This language of the ministerial party acted powerfully upon a nation naturally brave as well as proud ; and the public mind became gradually disposed to war, although there still appeared frequent petitions in favor of peace. About this time, disastrous news was received of the Newfoundland fisheries. The Congress having prohibited all transportation of provisions to these banks, the fishermen, to avoid famishing, were compelled to abandon them precipitately, and repair to other shores. But another misfortune more formidable awaited them ; the sea swelling all at once, with unusual fury, rose more than thirty feet above its ordinary level. The irruption was so sudden, that all means of safety were of no avail ; more than seven hundred fishing barks were overwhelmed, and perished with their crews. Several large ships also foundered with all on board. The devastation was no less terrible upon land ; the progress of the wide inundation was marked with universal destruction. This fatal event made a serious impression in England ; it was looked upon as a presage of ill. It seemed as if fortune was every where irritated against the British empire. Superstition chilled their spirits. They were induced to form discouraging comparisons.

On the part of the colonists, a propitious sky, abundance of provisions, health of troops, success of arms, multitudes crowding to their standards. On the part of the English, on the contrary, an army besieged, mortal diseases, wounds incurable, toil and pain, famine, every species of suffering ; an angry sky, a furious sea, horrible shipwrecks, martial ardor extinct, every thing in rapid declension. The antagonists of government either from ambition or the love of liberty, the merchants from personal interest or zeal for the public good, seized this moment of general discouragement. Petitions against the war arrived from all parts ; the cities of London and Bristol were the first to send them. They expatiated upon the blood that was about to be shed, the treasure to be expended, the new enemies to be encountered ; it was represented that the obstinacy of the colonists would render even victory too costly ; that the victor and the vanquished would be involved in one common ruin. They

exhorted, they prayed, they conjured the government to renounce hostile resolutions which promised no good, and threatened so many disasters.

But the ministers were not to be shaken by remonstrances. The animosity of their adversaries was, however, increased by an incident which drew the attention of all; the Earl of Effingham, an officer distinguished for his services, and possessed of an ample fortune, had, upon all occasions, defended with great warmth the cause of the colonists. Not willing to betray his conscience, he offered the king his resignation; his conduct was greatly applauded; the cities of London, of Dublin and others, commended and thanked him in public letters. Many other officers followed his example; resignations became frequent. Those who from taste give their attention to political matters, will, no doubt, observe upon this occasion, with what facility in England an opinion at variance with that of the government may be openly professed; since its opponents, instead of exposing themselves to its vengeance, often become the objects of public favor. And upon consideration of the enterprises executed in various times by the British nation, and the energy with which it has sustained long wars against the most formidable powers, it is impossible not to perceive how much they deceive themselves who think that a free government enfeebles nations, and that their force can only be completely developed by despotism.

The declamations of the party in opposition, and the numerous resignations of officers, had caused the affair of enlistments to labor extremely. It was in vain that the officers appointed for this service caused the drums to beat, and the royal standard to be erected in the most populous cities; in vain did they promise bounties and exorbitant pay; scarcely a few individuals came to offer their service; Catholics and Protestants, all manifested an equal repugnance.

Not but that among the inhabitants of the northern parts of Great Britain, the regiments found wherewith to recruit themselves; but this resource was altogether inadequate to the exigency. The ministers therefore found themselves in the greatest embarrassment; to extricate themselves from which, they determined to have recourse to foreign aid. With gold, which they had in abundance, they hoped to procure themselves men, of whom they had so much need. Accordingly, to this end they made overtures to the court of St. Petersburg, in order to obtain twenty thousand Russians, that were to have been transported to America the following spring. They made great dependence upon these soldiers, who, in the preceding war against the Turks, had acquired a brilliant reputation for bravery and discipline. But their hopes were not realised; this government would not consent that its soldiers should enter into foreign service, and for a small sum of gold, shed their blood in a quarrel wherein Russia had no sort of interest. The ministers then turned their



views in the direction of the United Provinces. The States-General had in their pay some Scotch battalions; and these the English government demanded in order to employ them in the American war. It was hoped that their ancient alliance, and other common interests, would easily determine the States-General to comply with this demand. But it appeared of such extreme importance to the States, that not presuming to take the decision of it upon themselves, they chose to consult the provincial assemblies. Those of Zeland and of Utrecht gave their consent, Holland and the others refused. John Derk, of Chapelle, spoke with great force against the proposition in the assembly of Overysse. He said it was too far beneath the dignity of the republic to intermeddle in the quarrels of a foreign nation; that the forces of Holland were too weak, and her commerce too flourishing, for her to interfere so imprudently in the disputes of others; that if she succoured England against America, other very powerful states, alluding to France, would succour America against England, and that thus the United Provinces would find themselves drawn into a dangerous war. He reminded of the tyranny exercised by the English upon the seas, the forced visit of the Dutch vessels, and the confiscation of their cargoes, under pretext of contraband. He omitted not to paint the cruel character of this war, in which the ferocious Indians were already taken into the English pay. The opinion of the orator prevailed, and there was every motive that it should. The Dutch considered the American cause very similar to that of their ancestors, and it appeared to them intolerable to concur in chastising those who followed their own example. The English party and the French party manifested in this occurrence an astonishing conformity of opinion; the first, because they feared that violent means would force the Americans at length to throw themselves into the arms of France; the second, because they wished to see humbled the pride and the power of the British nation. It is certain, that at this epoch, the prosperity and opulence of England excited the envy of the universe, and that her haughty behavior filled all hearts with a secret enmity.

But the ministers having despatched numerous agents into Germany, obtained more success with the princes of the Houses of Hesse, of Brunswick, and other petty sovereigns of this country. They acceded to a convention which filled the cabinet of Saint James with alacrity and with hope; the ministers were overjoyed that German promptitude should, in so pressing a need, have counterbalanced English reluctance.

A double advantage was found in the employment of German troops. They had never darkened their minds with abstruse questions of liberty and public law; and the difference of language was a security against the efforts which the Americans might have made to mislead and seduce them to join their party. This apprehension

caused the ministry great anxiety with respect to the English soldiers, who spoke the same dialect as the Americans, and went to combat men who defended, or appeared to defend, a cause more favorable to the subjects than to the government.

When the news got abroad in England of the treaty of subsidy with the German princes, it would be difficult to describe the fury of the opponents of the ministry. Many even among their own partisans were heard to condemn their conduct with asperity. They said, it was a scandalous thing that the mercenary soldiers of foreign princes should come to interfere in domestic dissensions; that daring and artful ministers might one day take advantage of this fatal example to subvert the established constitution, and to put down all liberty in England itself; that when these soldiers should have terminated their enterprise in distant regions, different pretexts might be found for conducting them into places less remote, and perhaps even into the heart of the kingdom; that this was a state offence, an act of high treason, the having attempted to open the entrance of the British territory to foreign troops without consent of parliament.

It is certain that no resolution of the ministers had ever produced so much disgust, and so alarming a fermentation among the people, as the present. It rendered more violent the fury of some, alienated others, and appeared to all illegal in principle, perilous in its object, and injurious to the British name; inasmuch as it seemed an admission that the English were not in a situation to adjust of themselves this great quarrel. The disapprobation was general, the cause of the war and the obstinacy of ministers began to be openly condemned.

In the midst of this effervescence the parliament was convoked. But before entering into a description of the debates which took place in this session, it appears to us necessary to relate what were, at this time, the designs of the ministry relative to the American war. Perceiving how odious they were become to the nation for never having consented to hear of any proposition of accord, and for having wanted either the capacity or the will to carry on the war with adequate preparations, they resolved at length to manifest extraordinary vigor, and to employ against the Americans a force so formidable as to leave them no hope of resistance.

They could not but perceive how greatly the reputation of the British arms had already suffered; and they saw how important it was to apply a prompt remedy in order to prevent the worst consequences, and especially a war with the European powers. Although they often affected to congratulate themselves upon the good dispositions of these powers, they were nevertheless persuaded that this neutrality could not continue, if the war drew into length, and always to the prejudice of England. It was easy to believe that France had eyes open upon what passed, and that she waited but for the occasion to show herself.

The English ministers at this epoch, however stinted the measure of their magnanimity and sagacity, were still not so simple as to be deluded by friendly protestations, which are lavished with the more profusion the more they are void of sincerity. It was known that in all the ports of France the most strenuous exertions were employed in equipping ships of war and accumulating naval munitions, and that the government was animated with an ardent desire to repair recent losses, and to restore all the force and the splendor of the French marine; that the entire nation applauded the views of the court, and demonstrated the utmost promptitude to second them. Besides, it was no longer a mystery that munitions of war were daily expedited from the French ports for America, if not by the orders of the government itself, at least with its tacit concurrence. It was observed, not without extreme jealousy, that the French had lately despatched a numerous fleet to the West Indies, and that their land troops so increased in that quarter, that they already had the appearance of an army prepared to take the field. It had been seen with disquietude that French officers were in conference, for the space of many days, with general Washington, at the camp of Boston, and that they were afterwards admitted to an audience by the Congress. The past admonished the English ministry of the future. In no time had war broken out in America that the French and British nations had not taken part in it, the one against the other. It was, therefore, natural to think, that such also would be the event this time; it was even the more probable now that interests were at stake of far greater moment than had ever before been agitated between the two powers. France manifested in her conduct an admirable address. She would not throw off the mask in these beginnings, either because she feared that by engaging prematurely in the defence of the Americans, the English government might be induced to offer them such terms of accommodation as, in reconciling the two parties, would turn their united forces against her; or especially because she was not yet entirely prepared for maritime war. She wished to temporise until her armaments were completed, and until the continuation of reciprocal outrages should have rendered all arrangement impossible. It was also important for her to wait till the Americans, more enlightened with respect to their situation, and encouraged by the success of their arms, should have decided at length to proclaim their independence. All reconciliation then became impracticable; as well on account of the greater exasperation of minds, and the aggravation of offences, as from the absolute contrariety of the scope towards which the two parties tended.

There would no longer be any question of an accord under certain conditions; the separation must then be total. Such was the thought of the French government relative to the time in which it ought to discover itself. But in order that the Americans might not lose all hope,



it was determined to grant them clandestinely all the succours, and to make them all the promises proper to inspire them with confidence in a more efficacious cooperation at a suitable time.

Nor could it be doubted, that when France should have resolved to support the Americans without disguise, Spain also would immediately espouse the same cause, as well in consequence of the family compact, as from the identity of interests, and perhaps even from an earnest desire to efface the recent stain of the unfortunate expedition against Algiers.

All these dangers were continually present in the minds of the British ministry; they resolved, therefore, to prevent them by measures as prompt as energetic.

Independently of the arms and munitions which the arsenals and armories of England could furnish in abundance, the government ordained that eighty ships of war should be stationed upon the coasts of America to favor the transportation of troops and of munitions wherever the good of the service might require, to second all the operations of the army, to traverse those of the enemy, and to destroy his marine.

Exclusively of the corps already found in America, it was determined to send thither upwards of forty-two thousand men, of regular troops, between English and Germans; that is twenty-five thousand of the first, and a little more than seventeen thousand of the second. These German troops were composed of four thousand three hundred Brunswickers, twelve thousand three hundred and ninety-four Hessians of the Landgrave, and six hundred and sixty-eight of the hereditary prince of Hesse, count of Hanau.\*

In adding to this number all the recruits of Canada, the corps of American Royalists and Indians, a totality was hoped for of fifty-five thousand men, supposing the companies all complete. But every deduction made, it was deemed a certainty that in any event the army would exceed forty thousand effective combatants; a force that was believed more than sufficient to subdue all America.

The ministers also thought it expedient to accompany the preparations of war with several particular provisions, which they considered as very proper to second the effect of them. Knowing, for example, how much the Americans were in want of money, and that they had no means to procure it but by the way of commerce, they resolved to interrupt it entirely, hoping that private interest would carry it against political obstinacy, and that the absolute failure of metallic currency would subject the bills of credit to a fatal depression. On the other hand, in order not to reduce the Americans to seek their safety in

\* England contracted for the German troops upon the conditions following. She gave a Brunswicker, seven guineas levy money, and four and a half pence sterling daily; a Hessian of the Landgrave seven guineas bounty, and five and a half pence sterling pay; a Hessian of the hereditary prince, seven guineas bounty, and sixpence sterling a day.

despair, they thought it best to authorise certain royal commissioners to grant individual amnesties. They persuaded themselves that many of them, vanquished by such clemency, would throw themselves into the arms of England, or, at least, that the more timid would lay down arms, and recompose themselves in their accustomed tranquillity. The rest, according to their ideas, might then be easily overpowered. Such were the measures the ministers had matured, and which they intended to submit to the deliberations of parliament.

The king pronounced, on opening the session, a very remarkable discourse ; he spoke of the machinations employed in America to seduce the people, and infect them with opinions repugnant to the constitution, and to their subordination towards Great Britain. He said the insurgents now openly avowed their resistance and revolt, and had assumed to themselves all the powers of government ; that in order to amuse they had made specious protestations of loyalty, but that in fact they were aiming at independence ; that he hoped, however, the spirit of the British nation was too high, and her resources too numerous, tamely to give up that which had been acquired with so many cares, and with so many toils ; that it was now become the part of wisdom to put a speedy end to these disorders, by the display of all the forces of the kingdom ; but that as clemency was always to be preferred to rigor, his intention was to grant particular pardons, and to withdraw, from the calamities of war, the persons and the places that should give evidence of their fidelity. The ministers moved for the usual address of thanks to the king, and that the measures proposed should be approved.

But lord John Cavendish answered them with an extreme vehemence, that he could not sufficiently testify his surprise at their obstinacy in pursuing a plan which had already produced such deplorable results.

‘ You see one half the empire lost, the other discontented and tottering ; a kingdom of late the most prosperous, now sinking under every misfortune ; a nation once renowned for its virtues, now contaminated with corruption ; and arrived in the train of every vice, losses, discomfiture and shame. The Americans are charged with planning independency ; certainly it is not the merit of England that they have not yet adopted such a resolution, for the ministers have neglected no possible violence to compel them to it. They are charged with dissimulation ; but they have constantly affirmed that the terms of reconciliation were those of returning to the state of things existing in 1763. It is desired to send against them numerous armies and formidable fleets ; but they are at home surrounded by friends, and abounding in all things. The English are at an immense distance, stinted in the means of subsistence ; having for enemies, climate, winds, and men. And what wealth, what treasures, will not be necessary to subsist your troops in those distant countries ! Impenetrable forests, inaccessible mountains will serve the Americans,

in case of disaster, as so many retreats and fortresses, whence they will rush forth upon you anew. You will, therefore, be under a constant necessity to conquer or die ; or what is worse than death, to fly ignominiously to your ships. The Americans will avail themselves of the knowledge of places, which they only have, to harass the British troops, to intercept the ways, to cut off supplies, to surprise outposts, to exhaust, to consume, to temporise and prolong, at will, the duration of the war. Imagine not that they will expose themselves to the hazard of battles ; they will vanquish us by dint of fatigue, placed, as we shall be, at a distance of three thousand miles from our country. It will be easy for them, impossible for us, to receive continual reinforcements. They will know how to use the occasion of their temporary superiority to strike decisive blows ; the tardy succours that may arrive to us by the Atlantic, will not prevent our reverses ; they will learn, in our school, the use of arms and the art of war ; they will eventually give their masters fatal proofs of their proficiency.

‘ But let victory be supposed, can there be any doubt that it will be sanguinary, that its results will be lands laid waste, towns desolated by fire, subjects envenomed by implacable hatred, the prosperity of commerce annihilated, and reciprocal distrusts always ready to rekindle war. Long have standing armies been considered as dangerous to liberty ; but the protracted and difficult war which you are about to engage in will enormously increase these armies. Is it to dissipate our fears on this point that ministers subsidise these bands of Germans, an excellent race assuredly, but admirably adapted to serve the purposes of the fautors of despotism ? I have supposed that we shall be victorious, let us now suppose we should be beaten. Who will restore our treasures exhausted, our commerce annihilated, the spirit of our troops extinguished, our national glory, first source of public virtue, unworthily eclipsed ? Who will efface the stigma branded upon the British name ? In our reverses we shall not have the consolation of having acted with maturity of reflection, or that of having been taken unawares. The quarrel of America will soon become the quarrel of Europe ; and if our country perish not therein, it must be attributed rather to its happy star than to the wisdom of those who govern it. Such is the importance, such are the consequences of the subject, that I cannot but deem it an incomprehensible fact to see the passions allowed full scope on every side, instead of that calm which ought to preside in the consideration of our melancholy situation, and in the investigation of the most prompt, the most efficacious, and the most expedient remedies. Let us, therefore, unite in praying, in conjuring his majesty to suspend the effects of his anger, and to prevent the running with such precipitation to shed English blood by English hands. Rather let it be studied to calm and conciliate minds, to search out the causes of our discords,



to discover the means which may enable us to rejoin the lacerated parts of the British empire. Let us labor to restore to the government its majesty, to the laws the obedience which is their due, to the parliament its legitimate authority, and to the British people the tranquillity and happiness of which they are so eminently worthy.'

The temper of the assembly was favorable; the vehement discourse of lord Cavendish had made a profound impression upon the minds of all. But the partisans of the ministry answered him with equal warmth.

'We find it not easy to comprehend, they said, how these eloquent orators, who make such parade of their patriotism, can lavish so many pathetic flourishes to justify those who are found in rebellion against the authority of Great Britain? we are ignorant what strange pleasure they can take in embarrassing the government in its operations in the midst of so difficult a crisis. It is equally hard for us to conceive what motives they can have for wishing to demonstrate that the Americans will of necessity prove victorious. That such should be the language of Congress, and of the proclamations of Washington, nothing is less surprising; but that it is found in the mouth of an Englishman, of one of the fathers of the country, that we should see him glory in such assertions, and study to propagate them, is what cannot excite too much astonishment and indignation.

'It is affirmed the Americans are not aiming at independence; this we readily admit, if it is intended to maintain that they are not contending to have, but already possess and exercise this absolute independence. Have they not concentrated in their hands all the authority of government, in coining money, in creating bills of credit, in imposing taxes, in making levies, in declaring war, in committing hostilities, in granting letters of mark and reprisal? But the kind confiding personages, seated in front of us, answer that the colonists protest their devotion, and reject all idea of independency. New doctrine, indeed, that we are to give more credit to words than to facts! But while these credulous beings harangue within these walls, the Americans model and carry into effect a new form of government, no doubt to preserve the ancient constitution, and to unite themselves more intimately with Great Britain!

'They have proposed, we are told, conditions of accommodation; in what do they consist? In consenting to acknowledge the same sovereign. Assuredly they will acknowledge him, provided they may be excused from obeying his orders, and permitted to act their own will entire. And is it desired that England should stoop to such an arrangement, which, if it be not outrageous, is at least ridiculous. The parliament has opened a way of conciliation, whereby, if the right of taxation was not entirely renounced, it was certainly so restricted that the Americans were allowed to tax themselves. But we have to do with men who are alike insensible to benefits and to

clemency. With what words, with what a tone have they received our propositions? The universe knows it, and our secret enemies themselves have been astonished at it. If England must resolve to submit to such degradation, if she must give up honor, so essential to monarchies, if instead of taking arms against an enemy who defies us, who despises the government and the agents of Great Britain, we must bow with humility to his demands, continually more imperious, then let us blindly pursue the course which is marked out for us by our adversaries. That to reduce the colonies to obedience is an enterprise which may offer some difficulties, no one undertakes to deny. But the greater the difficulty, the greater the glory.

‘Those who would sow discouragement among us, little know the ability of the English generals, and the valor of our soldiers. The powerful house of Bourbon combined against us in the last war, was unable to make us bend; and the king of Prussia has found, in our assistance, the means of resisting the league of the North. England is queen of the seas; she has conquered those same countries which her ungrateful subjects now inhabit; and will she not be able to subdue also them?’

‘It is not impossible, we admit, that some European powers will take part in this war; especially considering our prosperity, the envy of foreigners, and the arts of these Americans, always busied in exciting the whole world against us. But are we to be influenced in our counsels by the desires or by the injustice of others? Let us do what we ought, to prevent what we fear. With arms we may command respect, while a timid policy would expose us to contempt.

‘War pursues the weak, but retires from the strong. What chimeras, too, these scrupulous spirits have been dreaming of about those innocent Germans, it is not easy to say. The example of mercenary troops is not new; their employment has always been without danger. Foreign soldiers are not those who could establish servitude upon the soil of England, but minds disposed to slavery; now, the clamors and exaggerations of demagogues more often lead to this, than the schemes of governments themselves. As to these long lamentations over the vices of the present day, we, for our part, have no hesitation to say, that we have a better opinion of a people among whom the sincerest respect is shown for good habits, whose civilisation has rendered them famous throughout the world, and who have achieved so many great actions, as well in peace, as in war. These imputations are but the phantoms of a morbid imagination, or the suggestions of the secret rage of these ambitious minds, who persuade themselves that no virtue can exist so long as they are not invested with supreme power. The destiny of Great Britain is now in the balance. After having seen her empire equally flourishing by land and by sea, and her fortune surpass that of all the other states of Christendom, the question is now, whether this prosperity shall con-

tinue, whether these rich and powerful colonies, the work of our hands, the fruit of our industry, the object of all our cares, the price of so much treasure and of so much blood, shall henceforth, by the unheard of ingratitude of their inhabitants themselves, by the artful machinations of their false friends, and of our secret enemies, be dismembered from their ancient country, and torn forever from the affectionate embraces of their tender mother? patiently to endure an event so calamitous, not to lavish our efforts, our fortunes, our life itself, to prevent its accomplishment, would be a turpitude which has no example in our history, and an approbrium from which we ought to preserve the British name.'

Thus spoke the ministerial orators; the votes were taken, and the motion of lord Cavendish was rejected. Some other members of the opposition proposed, with as little success, different plans of conciliation with the colonies. The debates were very animated; but the ministers, whose projects were already arranged, and all the preparations of war concluded, had no difficulty in obtaining the rejection of every contrary opinion.

Not satisfied with finding themselves in a situation to attack the insurgents, they wished also to cut off their principal resources, that is, to deprive them of men, arms, and money. The Americans employed a part of their men on board of privateers; they derived their arms and munitions, either secretly, or even openly, from foreign countries; and commerce furnished them with money. Accordingly, the ministers proposed a bill, importing that every species of traffic with the thirteen united colonies should be prohibited; that all American property, whether floating upon the sea or stationed in the ports, should be declared legal prize in favor of the officers and crews of the vessels of the king; that the men taken in the American ships should be compelled to serve indiscriminately, as common sailors, on board those of England; finally, that the crown should be authorised to send commissioners, empowered to grant pardons to such individuals as should appear to merit them, and to declare a colony, in whole or in part, in a state of obedience towards the king; in which case they might exempt them from the rigor of the laws, and restore them to their original condition.

This bill was a consequence of those already passed; it was conformable to the plan of the war which the ministers had adopted, and was generally to be approved. It contained, however, certain articles deserving of animadversion. To wish to make war against the Americans, upon sea as well as upon land, was altogether natural; it was no less judicious to constitute commissioners with authority to grant amnesties, as well to particular individuals as to provinces. But to confiscate, without distinction, private property and public property, to grant the booty to the captors, and force the men found on board the American ships, whatever might be their



rank or condition, to serve as common sailors on board the English ships, are acts that cannot fail to be condemned by every sound judging mind. The opposition expressed their abhorrence of these features of the bill in very sharp language ; but it passed, notwithstanding, by a triumphant majority.

1776. The parliament having terminated the affairs submitted to their deliberations, the king put an end to the present session, with the assurance that he was not apprehensive of any movement on the part of the European princes, who all manifested a desire to maintain concord and peace. The ministers had obtained from the parliament all they had demanded, and they had scarcely a doubt of the favorable issue of their enterprise. It seemed to them impossible that the collectitious soldiery of the Congress could hold their arms with a firm grasp in the presence of European troops ; they imagined that the bare rumor of the arrival of the English army would suffice to open for it the entrance of the country it was about to conquer.

‘ Even supposing, they said, that the colonial troops should presume to keep the field, how can it be imagined, that ill-armed, undisciplined, and so little used as they are to the dangers of war, and to the din of arms, they will be able to make any serious resistance against the veterans of Europe ? The first impression will be fatal to the Americans ; and the measures which have been taken to sow division among them, will then produce their full effect. Let only a small number submit to the terms of the amnesty, and the multitude will hasten to follow their example ; such is the ordinary course of revolutions. In order to accelerate these happy results, it will be essential that the royal commissioners, individuals as influential by their personal authority, as by the splendor of their rank, and the renown of their military achievements, should be always present to second the operations of the army, by seizing the favorable instant for the exercise of their ministry.’

Such were the reasonings and the hopes of the partisans of the government. And such, it must be admitted, was the way of thinking of the greater part of the nation. With some it was the effect of pride, or of confidence in the ministry ; with others, of the spirit of party, or of personal interest, man easily believing what he esteems useful to himself. There wanted not those, however, whom the love of country inspired with serious apprehensions for the future, or whom the fury of faction urged to announce the most disastrous presages. They judged of the obstinacy of the Americans by their own, and suffered no occasion to escape them of citing the miracles, as they expressed it, wrought in various times, and among manifold people, by the love of liberty. They greatly extolled the constancy, the intrepidity, the prowess of the Americans. Their invectives, their sarcasms, their taunts, were endless against the satellites of

tyranny ; thus designating the English soldiers, and particularly the German troops. They represented a total loss in defeat, and new dangers in victory ; they deplored the blood shed for so iniquitous a cause. Every day there appeared new publications in favor or against the colonists. Some reproached others with having sold their pen, these retorted upon those that they prostituted theirs in defence of licentiousness. A work of Doctor Price, on civil liberty, was particularly distinguished ; it was read every where with equal avidity. He received, on this subject, a letter of compliment from the city of London, accompanied with the present of a gold box.

The two brothers Howe, the one admiral of the fleet, and the other general-in-chief of the army in America, were named, by the king his commissioners for the reestablishment of peace in the colonies, and for granting pardons to those who should appear worthy of the royal mercy. Sir Peter Parker and lord Cornwallis were already, some time since, embarked for America, with several corps of troops. Admiral Hotham, and generals Burgoyne and Phillipps followed them with other English and German divisions.

While these things were passing in England, the provincials, who besieged Boston, began to entertain hopes not only of becoming masters of the city, but even of making the whole garrison prisoners, and of destroying the British squadron anchored in the port and bay. They expected impatiently that the cold would become so rigorous as to freeze the waters of the harbor, and the rivers that flow into it. The frost usually set in about the last of December, and they calculated that at this season the ice would be strong enough to enable them to march dryshod across the arm of the sea, which separates the peninsula from the continent, where they were encamped. The English, in such case, would not have been able to resist the much superior forces of the American army. But contrary to the ordinary course, the winter was extremely moderate ; the provincials vainly awaited the coming of ice. In this hope they had kept themselves tranquil in their quarters ; the delay was advantageous to the garrison. But the month of March arrived to reanimate operations ; the Americans panted to put an end, by a vigorous effort, to this long and tiresome siege. Their ardor prompted it, necessity required it. The hostile speech of the king, at the meeting of parliament, was arrived in America, and copies of it were circulated in the camp. It was announced there, also, that the first petition of Congress had been rejected. The whole army manifested the utmost indignation at this intelligence ; the royal speech was burnt in public by the infuriate soldiers. They changed, at this time, the red ground of their banners, and striped them with thirteen lists, as an emblem of the number, and of the union of the thirteen colonies.

The Congress, at the news of the rigorous proceedings of the government, and particularly of the act relating to commerce, and

the engagement of the German troops, saw plainly that no other resources were left them but in the way of arms. Without loss of time, wishing to take advantage of the universal irritation of the people, they urgently recommended to Washington to renounce all delay, to brave all dangers, and at whatever cost, to terminate the siege of Boston, and effectuate the expulsion of the enemy from the shelter of its walls. They foresaw that this army would soon be necessary to oppose the British forces at other points, and to protect other parts of the American territory. It was presumed that the English would direct their principal attack against the weakest places, and serious apprehensions were felt particularly for the city of New York. It was, therefore, extremely important to dislodge the enemy from the position of Boston, since otherwise he might, afterwards, operate against the rear of the American army. Pressed by positive orders, and stimulated at once by the force of circumstances and the desire of glory, Washington reflected upon the most efficacious means to secure the success of his enterprise. He was not without hopes of being able to carry the city by assault.

The part of the Cove of Boston, contiguous to Cambridge and Roxbury, was frozen, which greatly facilitated the passage ; and for crossing the water that remained up to the walls of Boston, a great number of boats had been provided. In addition to this, two floating batteries were stationed at the mouth of the river of Cambridge. It was known that the garrison suffered severely for the want of provisions, and that it was greatly enfeebled by fatigues and maladies. The commander-in-chief had, besides, the greatest confidence in the valor and constancy of his soldiers. He accordingly assembled all the generals, and proposed to them his plan of attack. Ward and Gates, both officers of great distinction, opposed it ; alleging, that without incurring so great a risk, the enemy might be forced to evacuate Boston by occupying the heights of Dorchester, which command the entire city. Washington did not conceal his dissatisfaction at this opposition ; but he was constrained to acquiesce in the opinion of the majority. It was resolved, therefore, to take the position of the heights. At the suggestion of generals Ward, Thomas, and Spencer, a great quantity of fascines and gabions had been prepared for this expedition. The fortresses of Ticonderoga and Crown Point had furnished heavy cannon, and a sufficient number of howitzers and mortars. It appears that general Howe, who was naturally very circumspect, thought himself too feeble to prevent the execution of this design, which was to be, however, decisive of the total issue of the siege.

The Americans, in order to occupy the attention of the enemy in another part, erected strong batteries upon the shore at Cobb's Hill, at Lechmere's Point, at Phipps Farm, and at Lambsdam, near Roxbury. They opened a terrible fire in the night of the second of



March ; the bombs, at every instant, fell into the city. The garrison was incessantly employed in extinguishing the flames of the houses in combustion, and in all the different services that are necessary in such circumstances. During this time the Americans prepared themselves with ardor, or rather with joy, to take possession of the heights. Companies of militia arrived from all parts to reenforce the army. The night of the fourth of March was selected for the expedition ; the chiefs hoped that the recollection of the events of the fifth of March, 1770, when the first blood had been shed in Boston by the English, would inflame, with new ardor, and a thirst of vengeance, those spirits already so resolute in their cause.

Accordingly, in the evening of the fourth, all the arrangements being made, the Americans proceeded in profound silence towards the peninsula of Dorchester. The obscurity of the night was propitious, and the wind favorable, since it could not bear to the enemy the little noise which it was impossible to avoid. The frost had rendered the roads easy. The batteries of Phipps Farm, and those of Roxbury, incessantly fulminated with a stupendous roar.

Eight hundred men composed the vanguard ; it was followed by carriages filled with utensils of intrenchment, and twelve hundred pioneers led by general Thomas. In the rear guard were three hundred carts of fascines, of gabions, and bundles of hay, destined to cover the flank of the troops in the passage of the isthmus of Dorchester, which, being very low, was exposed to be raked on both sides by the artillery of the English vessels.

All succeeded perfectly ; the Americans arrived upon the heights, not only without being molested, but even without being perceived by the enemy.

They set themselves to work with an activity, so prodigious, that by ten o'clock at night they had already constructed two forts, in condition to shelter them from small arms and grape-shot ; one upon the height nearest to the city, and the other upon that which looks towards Castle Island. The day appeared ; but it prevented not the provincials from continuing their works, without any movement being made on the part of the garrison. At length, when the haze of the morning was entirely dissipated, the English discovered, with extreme surprise, the new fortifications of the Americans.

The English admiral having examined them, declared, that if the enemy was not dislodged from this position, his vessels could no longer remain in the harbor without the most imminent hazard of total destruction. The city itself was exposed to be demolished to its foundations, at the pleasure of the provincials. The communication, also, between the troops that guarded the isthmus of Boston, and those within the town, became extremely difficult and dangerous. The artillery of the Americans battered the strand, whence the English would have to embark in case of retreat. There was no

other choice, therefore, left them, but either to drive the colonists from this station by dint of force, or to evacuate the city altogether.

General Howe decided for the attack, and made his dispositions accordingly. Washington, on his part, having perceived the design, prepared himself to repel it. The intrenchments were perfected with diligence; the militia was assembled from all the neighboring towns, and signals were concerted to be given upon all the eminences which form a sort of cincture about all the shore of Boston, from Roxbury to Mystic river, in order to transmit intelligence and orders with rapidity from one point to the other.

Washington exhorted his soldiers to bear in mind the 'fifth of March. Nor did he restrict himself to defensive measures; he thought also of the means of falling, himself, upon the enemy, if, during or after the battle, any favorable occasion should present itself. If the besieged, as he hoped, should experience a total defeat in the assault of Dorchester, his intention was to embark from Cambridge four thousand chosen men, who rapidly crossing the arm of the sea, should take advantage of the tumult and confusion to attempt the assault of the town. General Sullivan commanded the first division; General Greene the second. An attack was expected like that of Charlestown, and a battle like that of Breed's Hill. General Howe ordered ladders to be prepared to scale the works of the Americans. He directed lord Percy to embark at the head of a considerable corps, and to land upon the flats near the point, opposite Castle Island. The Americans, excited by the remembrance of the anniversary, and of the battle of Breed's Hill, and by the continual exhortations of their chiefs, expected them, not only without fear, but with alacrity; but the tide ebbed, and the wind blew with such violence, that the passage over became impossible. General Howe was compelled to defer the attack to early the following morning. A tempest arose during the night, and when the day dawned, the sea was still excessively agitated. A violent rain came to increase the obstacles; the English general kept himself quiet. But the Americans made profit of this delay; they erected a third redoubt, and completed the other works. Colonel Mifflin had prepared a great number of hogsheads full of stones and sand, in order to roll them upon the enemy when he should march up to the assault, to break his ranks, and throw him into a confusion that might smooth the way to his defeat.

Having diligently surveyed all these dispositions, the English persuaded themselves that the contemplated enterprise offered difficulties almost insurmountable. They reflected that a repulse, or even a victory so sanguinary as that of Breed's Hill, would expose to a jeopardy too serious, the English interests in America. Even in case of success, it was to be considered that the garrison was not sufficiently numerous to be able, without hazard, to keep possession of the peninsula of Dorchester, having already to guard not only the

city, but the peninsula of Charlestown. The battle was rather necessary, and victory desirable, to save the reputation of the royal arms, than to decide the total event of things upon these shores. The advantages, therefore, could not compensate the dangers. Besides, the port of Boston was far from being perfectly accommodate to the future operations of the army that was expected from England; and general Howe himself had, some length of time before, received instructions from lord Dartmouth, one of the Secretaries of State, to evacuate the city, and to establish himself at New York.

The want of a sufficient number of vessels had hitherto prevented him from executing this order. Upon all these considerations, the English generals determined to abandon Boston to the power of the provincials.

This retreat, however, presented great difficulties. An hundred and fifty transports, great and small, appeared scarcely adequate to the accommodation of ten thousand men, the number to which the crews and the garrison amounted, without comprehending such of the inhabitants, as having shown themselves favorable to the royal cause, could not, with safety, remain. The passage was long and difficult; for with these emaciated and enfeebled troops it could not be attempted to operate any descent upon the coasts. It was even believed to be scarcely possible to effect a landing at New York, although the city was absolutely without defence on the part of the sea. The surest course appeared to be to gain the port of Halifax; but besides the want of provisions, which was excessive, the season was very unfavorable for this voyage, at all times dangerous.

The winds that prevailed then blew violently from the northeast, and might drive the fleet off to the West Indies, and the vessels were by no means stocked with provisions for such a voyage. Besides, the territory of Halifax was a sterile country, from which no resource could be expected, and no provision could have been previously made there, since the evacuation of Boston and retreat to Halifax were events not anticipated. Nor could the soldiers perceive without discouragement that the necessity of things impelled them towards the north, apprised as they were that the future operations of the English army were to take place in the provinces of the centre, and even in those of the south. But their generals had no longer the liberty of choice. The Americans however being able by the fire of their artillery to interpose the greatest obstacles to the embarkation of the British troops, general Howe deliberated upon the means of obviating this inconvenience. Having assembled the selectmen of Boston, he declared to them, that the city being no longer of any use to the king, he was resolved to abandon it, provided that Washington would not oppose his departure. He pointed to the combustible materials he had caused to be prepared to set fire, in an instant, to the city, if the provincials should molest him in any shape. He



invited them to reflect upon all the dangers which might result, for them and for their habitations, from a battle fought within the walls; and he assured them that his personal intention was to withdraw peaceably, if the Americans were disposed, on their part, to act in the same manner. He exhorted them, therefore, to repair to the presence of Washington, and to inform him of what they had now heard.

The selectmen waited upon the American general, and made him an affecting representation of the situation of the city. It appears, from what followed, that he consented to the conditions demanded; but the articles of the truce were not written. It has been pretended that one of them was that the besieged should leave their munitions of war; this, however, cannot be affirmed with assurance. The munitions were, indeed, left; but it is not known whether it was by convention, or from necessity. The Americans remained quiet spectators of the retreat of the English. But the city presented a melancholy spectacle; notwithstanding the orders of general Howe, all was havoc and confusion. Fifteen hundred loyalists, with their families, and their most valuable effects, hastened, with infinite dejection of mind, to abandon a residence which had been so dear to them, and where they had so long enjoyed felicity. The fathers carrying burthens, the mothers their children, ran weeping towards the ships; the last salutations, the farewell embraces of those who departed, and of those who remained, the sick, the wounded, the aged, the infants, would have moved with compassion the witnesses of their distress, if the care of their own safety had not absorbed the attention of all.

The carts and beasts of burthen were become the occasion of sharp disputes between the inhabitants who had retained them, and the soldiers who wished to employ them. The disorder was also increased by the animosity that prevailed between the soldiers of the garrison and those of the fleet; they reproached each other, mutually, as the authors of their common misfortune. With one accord, however, they complained of the coldness and ingratitude of their country, which seemed to have abandoned, or rather to have forgotten them upon these distant shores, a prey to so much misery, and to so many dangers. For since the month of October, general Howe had not received, from England, any order or intelligence whatever, which testified that the government still existed, and had not lost sight of the army of Boston.

Meanwhile, a desperate band of soldiers and sailors took advantage of the confusion to force doors, and pillage the houses and shops. They destroyed what they could not carry away. The entire city was devoted to devastation, and it was feared every moment that the flames would break out to consummate its destruction.

The fifteenth of March general Howe issued a proclamation, forbidding every inhabitant to go out of his house before eleven o'clock

in the morning, in order not to disturb the embarkation of the troops, which was to have taken place on this day. But an east wind prevented their departure; and to pass the time they returned to pillaging. In the meanwhile, the Americans had constructed a redoubt upon the point of Nook's Hill, in the peninsula of Dorchester, and having furnished it with artillery, they entirely commanded the isthmus of Boston, and all the southern part of the town. It was even to be feared that they would occupy Noddle's Island, and establish batteries which, sweeping the surface of the water across the harbor, would have entirely interdicted the passage to the ships, and reduced the garrison to the necessity of yielding at discretion. All delay became dangerous; consequently the British troops and the loyalists began to embark the seventeenth of March, at four in the morning; at ten, all were on board. The vessels were overladen with men and baggage; provisions were scanty, confusion was every where. The rear guard was scarcely out of the city when Washington entered it on the other side, with colors displayed, drums beating, and all the forms of victory and triumph. He was received by the inhabitants with every demonstration of gratitude and respect due to a deliverer. Their joy broke forth with the more vivacity, as their sufferings had been long and cruel. For more than sixteen months they had endured hunger, thirst, cold, and the outrages of an insolent soldiery who deemed them rebels. The most necessary articles of food were risen to exorbitant prices.

Horse flesh was not refused by those who could procure it.\* For want of fuel, the pews and benches of churches were taken for this purpose; the counters and partitions of warehouses were applied to the same use; and even houses, not inhabited, were demolished for the sake of the wood. The English left a great quantity of artillery and munitions. Two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, of different caliber, were found in Boston, in Castle Island, and in the intrenchments of Bunker's Hill, and the Neck. The English had attempted, but with little success, in their haste, to destroy or to spike these last pieces; others had been thrown into the sea, but they were recovered. There were found, besides, four mortars, a considerable quantity of coal, of wheat, and of other grains, and one hundred and fifty horses.

Thus, after a siege as long as tiresome, the capital of the province of Massachusetts fell again into the power of the Americans. The joy of this happy event was felt, with enthusiasm, by all the confederation. It acquired an especial importance by the impulse it could

\* Provisions were become so scarce at Boston, that a pound of fresh fish cost twelve pence sterling, a goose eight shillings and four pence, a turkey twelve shillings and sixpence, a duck four shillings and two pence, hams two shillings and a penny per pound. Vegetables were altogether wanting. A sheep cost thirty-five shillings sterling, apples thirty-three shillings and four pence per barrel. Fire wood forty-one shillings and eight pence the cord; and finally, it was not to be procured at any price.

not fail to impart to the public spirit, and even by the influence it was likely to have upon future operations. We have here a new occasion to remark, with surprise, the blindness and presumption of the British ministry, who, instead of taking all the necessary measures to secure success, from the commencement of the war, seemed, of preference, to adopt all those that were calculated to injure its cause. Whether from having listened to English pride, or from having trusted to unfaithful reports, or finally, from having neglected the examples of history, the ministers had persuaded themselves that the provincials would shrink at the aspect of regular troops, and that their ardor would be converted immediately into a general terror.

They omitted to reflect that the very nature of things had excited, and already, for a length of time, had nourished the American revolution.

The colonists were become rich and powerful, and their original enthusiasm was far from being chilled. Misled by its prepossessions, the government knew not how to employ its forces; it refused to send succours when it was yet time, and hastened to lavish them when it was now too late.

The Americans, come into possession of Boston, immediately confiscated the property, moveable and immoveable, of the emigrants who had accompanied general Howe to Halifax. The sale was made at auction, and the produce applied to the exigencies of the public. The loyalists who had remained, were prosecuted and declared enemies and traitors to the country; their possessions were in like manner confiscated and sold. The first care of the Bostonians was directed to the necessity of fortifying their city, to preserve it, in future, from the calamities they had recently experienced. The works were commenced without delay, and urged with extreme diligence; all the citizens, in turn, contributed their labor. A French engineer, some Americans and four Prussians, had the direction of the whole. It was not, however, expected to render Boston a place of strength, capable of sustaining a regular siege; it sufficed to place it in a situation to resist a sudden attack.

Certain movements of the provincials, and especially the care they had taken to occupy some of the little islands situated in the bay of Boston, authorised the belief, that it was their intention to attack Fort William, erected upon Castle Island. General Howe, perceiving that the possession of this fort would enable them to defend the approaches of the city against the English ships, thought it expedient to dismantle and burn it previous to his departure. He was unable, however, to carry away its artillery, which he contented himself with spiking very precipitately.

Contrary winds, succeeded by a dead calm, prevented the English fleet, during more than a week, from getting out to sea. But at length it succeeded; and contrary to all expectation, considering the season, its passage to the port of Halifax was fortunate and rapid.



Admiral Shuldham had left in the waters of Boston, a squadron, under the command of commodore Bankes, to protect the navigation of the vessels of the king, which, in ignorance of the evacuation of the city, might continue their voyage towards it. This precaution had not all the effect that was desired; the bay being extensive, the cruisers lay in concealment behind the numerous little islands with which it is interspersed, and sprung suddenly upon the ships that presented themselves without mistrust. Among others, captain Manly took a prize laden with an immense cargo of provisions.

Washington, ignorant what were the plans of general Howe, and what direction the British fleet had taken, was not without disquietude for the city of New York. He wrote, in consequence, to brigadier-general lord Sterling, who commanded there, advising him to stand prepared, and that he had sent him a reenforcement of five battalions and several companies of riflemen. But the royal troops were very far from being in a condition to undertake any thing against that city; they esteemed themselves very fortunate in arriving sound and safe at Halifax. Before proceeding to further operations, general Howe chose to refresh his troops, and wait for the reenforcements that were expected from England.

The affairs of Congress assumed an aspect no less prosperous in North Carolina than in Massachusetts; in which, however, very serious commotions had begun to manifest themselves.

Governor Martin, although he had taken refuge on board the vessels of the king, did not, however, remain idle; and he busied himself incessantly in devising new machinations to retrieve the royal cause in his province. He flattered himself with the greater hopes of success, as he knew that admiral Peter Parker, and lord Cornwallis were departed from the ports of England for an expedition against the Carolinas. He was also informed that general Clinton, with some companies, was on his way to join him at Cape Fear, situated upon the river of the same name, and not far from Wilmington. At the head of these united forces, increased by the Scotch highlanders and the *regulators*, both formidable to the disaffected from their experience in the use of arms, and their ardent zeal for England, he had no doubt, whatever, but that he could create a revolt in the province, and reduce it anew under the authority of the king. After having concerted with all his partisans, he erected the royal standard, summoning all the inhabitants to rally round it in defence of country and lawful authority against rebels. To render more efficacious the succours of the highlanders and of the regulators, as well as of all the other loyalists, he named colonel Macdonald, an officer warmly devoted to the royal cause, captain-general of all the levies, that he might organise them into regular corps.

This plan succeeded according to his hopes. The concourse at Cross Creek swelled every day; the patriots were threatened with

an attack in this part unless a prompt remedy was applied. The provincial assembly opened their eyes upon the danger, and despatched, with all speed, against this head of loyalists, all the militia that were in preparation; and, at the same time, directed that others should be assembled from all parts of the province.

The two parties that divided Carolina thus found themselves, marshalled the one against the other, animated with an equal fury.

The patriots were commanded by general Moore; he went to take post, with a few pieces of cannon, in front of the loyalists, at a place called Rock-Fish Bridge, where, having broken the bridge, he intrenched himself. Macdonald summoned him to come and put himself under the royal standard, or to expect to be treated as an enemy. Moore answered him that he had himself to take an oath of fidelity to Congress, and to lay down arms, and that, in so doing, he should be received as a friend. During these negotiations, which Moore had the address to draw into length, his forces so increased that he soon acquired a decided superiority over his adversary. Macdonald, at length, perceived the danger of his situation; and though he was already surrounded on every side by the provincials, he disengaged himself with equal ability and courage. Marching rapidly, and without interruption, interposing continually between himself and his pursuers, rivers, forests, and difficult defiles, he measured a space of eighty miles, in defiance of the vigilance of the enemy, eager to cut off his retreat, and arrived at Moore's Creek, sixteen miles from Wilmington.

There he hoped to be joined by governor Martin and general Clinton, who were already arrived at Cape Fear. But the provincials, who had never ceased to follow him, not only prevented this junction, but reduced him to the necessity of giving battle. He displayed in it an extreme bravery; but captain Macleod, and many other of his officers having been killed, his troops were seized with a panic and fled, leaving their general in the midst of his enemies. Macdonald was made prisoner, with many other loyalists. Their enemies derived an immense advantage from this victory; for if Macdonald had been victor, or if he could only have effected his junction with governor Martin and general Clinton, they might then have waited at Cape Fear for the reenforcements that were coming from Ireland; and the affairs of the Congress would have been very near desperate in the southern provinces. The Carolinians learned, besides, to know their own strength, and refuted the opinion which had generally prevailed of the weakness of North Carolina. They had combated, with success, the *regulators* and the Scotch, who had appeared to them at first so formidable; and in the space of ten days they had assembled ten thousand men, full of courage and resolution.

The precipitation of the loyalists was the cause of their ruin; if they had temporised until the arrival of succours from Europe, and

then only raised the standard of the king, they might, without doubt, have struck a decisive blow, and thus have caused the balance to incline in their favor in the southern provinces.

We have left lord Dunmore cruising with his vessels upon the coast of Virginia; he continued still for a long time upon this station. But all the places of landing being diligently guarded by the militia, far from being able to make any impression, he could not even procure the sustenance necessary for the multitude accumulated on board his squadron. Consequently the excessive heats, the corruption of the water and of the provisions, and the crowd of men in the ships, generated offensive and deleterious miasmata. A pestilential malady carried off, in mass, the whites and the blacks; but it was especially mortal among the latter. In this deplorable state the squadron of lord Dunmore wandered from island to island, from shore to shore. He found, upon all points, the inhabitants armed to repulse him, and he wanted forces to open himself a passage through them. To crown the measure of misfortune, the winds drove a part of the ships upon the coasts of Virginia, where the wretched fugitives, become the prisoners of their own fellow-citizens, did but exchange this pestiferous abode for dark and horrible dungeons. At length, to escape a certain death upon these shores, lord Dunmore resolved to burn the ships of least value. The miserable wrecks of soldiers and of Virginians, buffeted by tempests, devoured by famine, by thirst, and by diseases, went to seek refuge in the Floridas, the Bermudas, and the West Indies. Thus delivered of its enemy, the province recovered tranquillity. Such was the catastrophe that terminated the expedition of lord Dunmore against Virginia, and the result of his plan of revolt of negroes against their masters.

Meanwhile, the Congress had not remitted their preparations of maritime war; they felt the necessity of protecting their own coasts from the insults of the enemy's cruisers, as also the extreme utility of intercepting the storeships of the English armies. There was no deficiency either of materials suitable for the construction of vessels, or of excellent mariners; the interruption of commerce and of the fisheries having left a very great number of them without employment. Accordingly the work was pushed with such ardor in the navy yards of Maryland, of Philadelphia, and of Rhode Island, that upon the commencement of the year were seen floating in the waters of the Delaware five frigates, or corvettes, and thirteen gun sloops,\* completely equipped and armed.

\* The frigates were the Alfred and the Columbus, of thirty-two guns; the corvettes, the Andreas Doria of sixteen, the Sebastian Cabot of fourteen, and the Providence of twelve. The thirteen gun-boats bore the names following; the Washington, the Dickinson, the Chatham, the Camden, the Burke, the Effingham, the Bull-dog, the Franklin, the Congress, the Experiment, the Hancock, the Adams, and the Warren.



The Congress had ordained, besides, that thirteen frigates, of thirty-six guns each, should be constructed with all possible expedition. Then in order to form the seamen to the evolutions of maritime war, and, at the same time to procure themselves arms and munitions, and especially powder, they ordered Ezechiél Hopkins, captain-general of the fleet, to make sail for the Bahama Islands. He put to sea about the middle of February, and after a prosperous voyage arrived, in the beginning of March, at Abaco, one of these islands.

Being informed that the English had amassed a considerable quantity of munitions in that of Providence, he made a sudden descent there, and seized them. The Americans found many pieces of cannon, with bombs, balls, and one hundred and fifty casks of powder, the capital object of the expedition. In their return they combated honorably a British frigate, and captured a brig. The squadron of Congress, with its prizes, entered the port of New London. Frequent engagements also took place in the bay of Boston, between the ships of commodore Bankes, and those of Massachusetts. One of the most remarkable was that in which captain Muggford captured a transport, laden with a great quantity of arms and military stores.

The navy of Congress not only distinguished itself upon the coasts, but also, what was scarcely to have been hoped, in the open sea. Its success perceptibly increased the confidence and hope of the Americans; they accustomed themselves, by little and little, to act as a nation enjoying its entire independence.

The desire to see it universally acknowledged was excited in some, and fortified with others, in proportion to the prosperous result of their efforts. They were not crowned with the same happy success in Canada. Arnold, who had continued with his feeble corps the siege of Quebec, found himself oppressed by a multitude of obstacles. The reenforcements the Congress had promised him, arrived but slowly and by parties, either because the severity of the season rendered the roads nearly impracticable, or, because the ill success of the assault of Quebec had considerably damped the ardor with which the novelty and brilliant commencement of this expedition had inspired the Americans.

It appeared that Congress itself, either distracted by too many cares, or wanting the necessary means, had neglected to take proper measures for conducting the Canadian war to the object desired. In vain had the greater part of the garrison of Montreal been marched to Quebec, the soldiers under Arnold still scarcely amounted to a thousand effective men.

The Canadians, who at first had welcomed the Americans with cordiality, and had supplied them with all that was in their power, finding themselves afterwards exposed to various excesses on the part of this undisciplined troop, had passed from benevolence to aversion.

It must be admitted, they had too much reason for it. The Americans had not only omitted to conciliate the countenance of the Catholic priests, which irritated their self-love, but they had even overwhelmed them with contempt, which excited among them detestation and a thirst of vengeance. The insinuations of governor Carleton and of all his partisans succeeded, therefore, without difficulty, in persuading them to refuse the sacraments to all those who had declared for the Americans. This refusal produced an impression so serious upon the minds of the Canadians, that the provincials, perceiving how prejudicial it might prove to their interests, despatched a Catholic priest from Maryland, in order to dispense to the Canadians all the spiritual succours of which they were deprived. But this remedy was employed too late. Affairs already assumed the most discouraging aspect.

A French gentleman of intrepidity, named Beaujeu, had assembled a corps of nobles and other inhabitants with whom he had influence, at the head of whom he had taken the field. The Americans had engaged him with advantage ; but they had no means to repair the injury their cause had suffered, as well from its known weakness, as from the outrages committed against the inhabitants of the country. To increase their distress, the season approached in which the reenforcements, already known to be departed from England, were about to arrive. The river St. Lawrence, no longer obstructed with ice, opened them a free passage up to the city of Quebec. It would have been too hazardous to await them with forces so disproportionate.

In this critical position, Arnold, who had recently been promoted to the rank of brigadier-general, prepared with a courage as great as his resources were feeble to reduce the besieged city. Its possession would have rendered the enmity of the Canadians in a great measure impotent, and the English troops would thus have lost their communication with the upper parts of the province.

Arnold was not entirely without hope of success. Governor Carleton experienced a dearth, rendered more and more afflicting by the vigilance and success with which the provincials intercepted all his convoys of provisions ; nor did they cease, besides, to harass and fatigue the garrison by false attacks and multiplied stratagems, hoping from its weakness to find sooner or later some way to surprise the place.

They had approached the walls to open the trench, and had erected batteries upon the banks of the river, in order to cannonade the English vessels. They fired with red hot balls, and launched different sorts of fireworks into the city ; but general Carleton watched attentively and disconcerted all their manœuvres. The obstacles that Arnold encountered, were carried to the utmost by the smallpox, a malady so formidable in these climates. The reenforce-

ments he expected, arrived greatly reduced by this scourge ; the soldiers fled from terror ; or were infected by the contagion ; the ranks thinned continually. It was at this epoch that general Thomas took the command. He wished before raising the siege, to make a last effort, by setting fire to the ships of the governor, and seizing the occasion of the disorder to attempt the assault. The river being already free from ice before Quebec, on the night of the third of May, the Americans sent down a fire-ship ; their ladders were prepared for the assault. The English having taken the alarm, began to fire ; the men who managed the fire-ship, finding themselves discovered, set her on fire.

In this posture of affairs, having no longer any thing to expect, either from a regular siege or a scalade, seeing the troops diminish daily, as well in number as in courage, having no more provisions left than for three days, and fearing, at every moment, the arrival of the English reenforcements, the American general resolved to abandon the expedition entirely, and to retire towards Montreal. The very morning of the day appointed for raising the siege, the Isis ship of fifty-four guns, arrived in sight of Quebec, with the frigate Surprise, and another vessel of less force.

With equal industry and peril, they had ventured to navigate the river from its mouth, in the midst of enormous masses of floating ice. They had on board several companies of veteran soldiers, who were immediately put on shore.

The ships now having the command of the river, intercepted all communication between the different parts of the American camp, and even captured a great number of vessels belonging to the provincials. This unexpected event threw them into the greatest consternation. They precipitately abandoned their quarters, leaving behind them their baggage, their artillery, their munitions, and whatever might have retarded their march ; the English seized them immediately.

The sick, attacked for the most part with the smallpox, escaped as they could ; the Canadians were moved with compassion, and concealed them here and there. Meanwhile, the governor had sallied out at the head of the garrison to pursue the Americans. He made no few of them prisoners ; but they gave themselves no pause until they had marched full forty-five miles up the St. Lawrence ; then, having halted a few hours, they retired to the mouths of the Sorel, where they were joined by four regiments.

They lost, in this place, general Thomas, who died of the smallpox ; his valor and his integrity rendered him the object of universal consideration. General Sullivan succeeded in command. General Carleton, after such prosperous success, reflecting upon his extreme weakness, ceased to pursue the enemy, and returned to Quebec, intending to wait for reenforcements, and then take the field with



forces sufficient to maintain himself there. But he first gave the most honorable proofs of that humanity which distinguished him. The Americans, whether wounded or sick, were concealed in the forests or in the habitations of the Canadians, where they had to suffer all evils united. The governor issued a proclamation, by which he ordained that men, appointed for this purpose, should go in search of these unfortunate men, to cure them at the public expense, and provide for all their wants. Finally, that they might not fear to discover themselves, he pledged his faith, that so soon as they should have recovered health, he would leave them at their full and entire liberty to return, without conditions, to their own habitations.

A few days subsequent to the deliverance of Quebec, that is, about the last of the month of May, several regiments of English and Brunswickers arrived in Canada. These reinforcements carried the British army in that province to upwards of thirteen thousand men, commanded by experienced generals, among whom Carleton was the first in reputation, as in rank. Under his orders were Burgoyne, Phillipps, and Reidesel, a German general of considerable name.

Wishing to profit by the rout of the Americans, they were all of opinion that the war should be carried into the upper parts of Canada, and even further, if fortune should prove propitious. The English general accordingly assembled all his forces at *Trois Rivières*, a town situated upon the left bank of the St. Lawrence, at a distance nearly equal from Montreal and from Quebec.

The constancy of the Americans had been put to a severe test under the walls of this capital; they had also to sustain a sanguinary conflict in the environs of Montreal, against a corps of English, of Canadians, and of savages. They occupied a small fort situated in a place called *les Cedres*, a few miles above Montreal.

The royalists appeared before it, and captains Beadle and Butterfield, more careful of their safety than of their honor, and the interests of their country, immediately surrendered upon terms. Some companies had commenced their march from Montreal to bring them succour, but they fell in with a party of the enemy who dispersed them, after an obstinate and bloody resistance. The Indians exercised the most shocking cruelties upon the prisoners. Arnold, who was then at Montreal, unable to endure that the American arms should receive a check from those of the Canadians and savages, immediately took the field in order to avenge this affront. But captain Foster gave him to understand, that if he attacked him and refused to consent to an exchange of prisoners, all the Americans that were found in his power would be massacred immediately by the Indians. Arnold was constrained, though with extreme repugnance, to yield to necessity.

Neither these adverse events, nor the aspect of a position so critical, could shake the courage of the Americans. It was at this very moment that they attempted an operation full of danger and of no little difficulty.

The English troops and those of Brunswick were much dispersed, and very distant from each other. A strong corps was quartered at Trois Rivières, under the command of general Frazer ; another, at the orders of general Nesbit, continued on board the transports ; and the most considerable corps, forming several divisions, under generals Carleton, Burgoyne, Phillipps, and Reidesel, was distributed upon the banks, and upon the river itself, in its lower part, on the side of Quebec. Some other batteaus, full of soldiers, had already passed up the river above Trois Rivières, towards the Sorel. The Americans conceived the project of surprising and cutting off the English division that occupied Trois Rivières, before the others could come to its assistance. General Sullivan accordingly directed general Thompson to embark with two thousand men, upon fifty batteaus that were kept in preparation for the use of the army, and to descend the river. Thompson coasted along the right bank of the lake St. Pierre, formed by the vast breadth of the river in this place, and arrived without being perceived at Nicolette, a town situated upon the same bank of the St. Lawrence, a little above Trois Rivières. His design was to cross the river during the night, to land nine miles above Trois Rivières, and to fall upon the enemy before day. But it had already appeared, before the Americans, retarded by many unexpected obstacles, could gain the left bank. They marched, however, with incredible rapidity towards the destined point ; but treacherous guides misled them. On having discovered it, they resumed the right road, which was excessively difficult.

Meanwhile, the sun was risen, and they were perceived by the troops that were on board the vessels. The alarm was soon given, and general Frazer was promptly apprized of the danger. The Americans, seeing themselves discovered, redoubled their celerity. They arrived at nine in the morning in sight of Trois Rivières ; but they found the English drawn up in order of battle, and prepared to receive them. The action was engaged ; the Americans, after a feeble struggle, were thrown into disorder ; and fled. This notwithstanding, they were rallied ; but the day was already lost without remedy. Nesbit landing all at once with his division, took the Americans in rear. From this moment their rout was complete. The soldiers no longer keeping any order, sought their safety in the woods.

Pressed in front by Frazer, who overwhelmed them with a fire of grape-shot, and intercepted by Nesbit, who prevented their return to the batteaus, they suffered horribly in the passage of a marsh. Having at length, by incredible efforts, succeeded in crossing it, they plunged into thick forests, where the English ceased to pursue them.

When they were able to rejoin their boats, they hastened to return to the mouths of the Sorel. They left many prisoners in the power of the English, among whom general Thompson himself, and colonel Irwin, with many other officers of distinction; they had few killed. The loss of the royal troops was still less. Such was the issue of the expedition of Trois Rivières, conceived with ability, undertaken with intrepidity, but finally directed with imprudence.

The success depending entirely on a surprise by night, it is certain, that when the Americans perceived they could only attack in open day, and still more, that their enemy was on his guard, the part of wisdom would have been to halt, and to recover their first position. Discouraged by this check, and by the consideration of their weakness, the provincials resolved to retreat. The English, on the contrary, animated by victory, determined to use it with all promptitude. Having combined all their divisions at Trois Rivières, they proceeded four days after the action, towards the Sorel, part by the way of the land, and part upon the river. They arrived at the confluence, a few hours after the Americans had destroyed their batteries, and carried away the artillery and munitions.

The English generals then formed two columns, that of the right was to ascend the St. Lawrence and take possession of Montreal, pass the river to Longueville, traverse the country which is comprehended between the St. Lawrence and the Sorel, and reunite with the column of the left under fort St. John. The column of the left was to ascend the river up to this fort, which it was intended to reduce by assault, or by siege, if it was necessary. It was presumable that the Americans would endeavor to make a stand there. The first column soon arrived at Montreal and entered it without obstacle; Arnold had evacuated it, as well as the whole island, the night preceding. Meanwhile, Burgoyne advanced by the Sorel with extreme caution; the country being suspicious, he feared some ambuscade. The Americans retired with an equal circumspection. They wished to avoid an affair of the rear guard, and to save their baggage, which, conveyed in batteaus, followed upon the river the progress of the army.

Arnold at length gained fort St. John, without having been attacked, and there effected his junction with Sullivan. But this general, knowing the disadvantage of his position, determined not to risk a siege; he set fire to the magazine and barracks, dismantled the fortifications, and withdrew under the cannon of Crown Point. Burgoyne could not follow him, all the batteaus having been burnt.

Although this retreat has not been absolutely exempt from confusion, it was not, however, with the exception of the check of Trois Rivières and that of Cedres, attended with any considerable loss either of men, of arms, of munitions, or of baggage.



In the midst of so many dangers, general Sullivan neglected no part of his duty ; the Congress addressed him public thanks. The English found themselves compelled to suspend their pursuit.

By falling back upon Crown Point, the Americans had interposed between themselves and the enemy, all the length of Lake Champlain, of which a large number of armed vessels rendered them masters. The English could not hope to proceed further south, by the way of the lake, unless they armed a fleet superior to that of the provincials. It was necessary, besides, that they should construct a great number of batteaus, to serve for the transport of the troops and munitions of a numerous army.

There had arrived from England, it is true, six large armed vessels destined for this use ; but the falls of the river Sorel, near Fort Chambly, rendered their entrance into the lake, if not impossible, certainly very difficult. The construction of flat boats presented, also, numerous difficulties, and required a considerable time. Upon these considerations the English renounced all further pursuit, and the Americans had leisure to prepare themselves to resist the future attacks of a powerful and warlike enemy.

The Americans were thus arrested by an insurmountable obstacle in this expedition of Canada, from which they had promised themselves so great advantages. But it should be considered, that either through inexperience, or from the difficulties which are wont to accompany new and tumultuary governments, this enterprise was not commenced until the season was already too far advanced in these cold regions ; it was not carried on with sufficient forces ; and the excesses of military license deprived the colonies of the ancient friendship of the Canadians, which was not only necessary, but even indispensable to the success of their cause. It is certain, however, that if this enterprise had been conducted with a prudence and vigor equal to the boldness which had dictated its plan, or even if destiny had not cut off the days of Montgomery at a moment so critical, the Americans would have gained the object of all their efforts. But fortune does not always favor the brave, nor do the brave always know how to use fortune well.

This expedition of Canada, moreover, led the government or British generals into a signal error with respect to the conduct of all this war ; to this cause, especially, must be attributed the inutility of all their efforts against America.

In effect, the invasion of Canada by the Americans, was perhaps the first motive which determined the English ministry to assemble so considerable forces in this province, and to divide their army into two distinct parts, one of which was to descend from Canada, by the lakes, into the interior of the colonies, and the other to attack them in front upon the coasts.

It is not improbable, that if instead of these two armies, the Eng-

lish had formed but one only, the war would have had a direction, and perhaps a conclusion, widely different.

The Congress decreed, in honor of a man beloved and revered by the Americans, that there should be procured from Paris a monument, with an appropriate inscription, to transmit to posterity the memory of the virtues and heroic qualities of Richard Montgomery.

Thus, by the example of those of the dead, they encouraged the virtues of the living. The authors of revolutions too often, of preference, employ bad citizens, either in consequence of their audacity in recommending themselves, or because, having no other principle but their personal interest, they are more pliant and more ductile in the hands of those who govern.

It should be observed, on the contrary, to the glory of the American Congress, that they sought out and distinguished men of worth. We dare not affirm that the number of such, in the times of the revolution, was more considerable in America than in any other country. But it does appear, that if there prevailed among the Americans of this epoch, the vices produced by an immoderate love of gain, those were scarcely remarked which have their origin in luxury, depravity of manners, and the ambition of power. Religion had not yet lost its authority over their minds, nor had it become fashionable with them to offer incense at the altars of vice, or openly to rail at virtue. It is remarkable that the English manifested no less enthusiasm than the Americans for the memory of Montgomery.

Within the parliament itself, there were found orators whose eloquence adjudged him all the praises with which the historians of antiquity have commemorated the most illustrious men of their times. Colonel Barre was particularly remarked for the noble pathos of the regrets he consecrated to the death of his gallant enemy. Burke and Fox endeavored to surpass this eulogium in their speeches; Fox, especially, who, as yet very young, already discovered the man he was afterwards to be. Lord North reprehended them sharply, exclaiming, that it was indecent to lavish so many praises upon a rebel. He admitted that Montgomery was brave, able, humane, and generous; but still he was only a brave, able, humane, and generous rebel; he cited this verse of Addison in Cato,—‘Curse on his virtues, they’ve undone his country.’ Fox answered him immediately, with warmth, that ‘the term “rebel,” applied to that excellent person, was no certain mark of disgrace, and therefore he was the less earnest to clear him of the imputation; for that all the great asserters of liberty, the saviors of their country, the benefactors of mankind, in all ages, had been called rebels; that they even owed the constitution, which enabled them to sit in that house, to a rebellion.’ He added this passage from the prince of Latin poets—

Sunt hic etiam sua præmia laudi,  
Sunt lachrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.

But it is time to resume the thread of the history. The Americans found a compensation for the disasters of Canada, in the success they obtained under the walls of Charleston, in South Carolina. The ministers had resolved to aim a vigorous blow at the southern provinces, because they had persuaded themselves, and not without reason, that the friends of England were more numerous there than in those of the north. They had no doubt that they would all show themselves so soon as the troops of the king should appear in force upon the coasts, or should have become possessed of some important post. They hoped with the succour of the loyalists to reestablish the ancient order of things in these provinces, and they calculated that thence they might afterwards attack in flank those of the middle and north ; which, being pressed in the rear, on the part of Canada, by a strong army, and in front on the part of the sea, by forces no less formidable, would thus be deprived of all power of resistance. The ministers already saw America returned to its ancient submission. They determined to turn their arms at first against North Carolina, as the weakest part, and to add to this conquest that of South Carolina and of Virginia, according to the success of operations.

For this reason the fleet, having on board the troops destined for this expedition, had sailed from the ports of England and Ireland before the others. General Clinton, who, at the head of another considerable corps, was to come from New York to join the new reenforcements, was already arrived at Cape Fear, not having been able to execute his design of attacking Virginia. But, on the one hand, the impatience of the loyalists of North Carolina had caused the miscarriage of the expedition, and their own ruin ; on the other, contrary winds and storms had so retarded beyond all expectation the passage of the fleet which, under the command of admiral Peter Parker, was bound for Cape Fear, that it could not reach that point until long after the calculated term, nor until the loyalists were already put down, and the inhabitants of the two Carolinas were not only apprised of the menaced attack, but had even already made all their preparations for resistance. It is certain that if the loyalists of North Carolina had delayed for some time longer to declare themselves ; or if the sea had been more propitious to the English, the affairs of Congress might have taken a disastrous direction in the south. The squadron of admiral Parker arrived at Cape Fear about the beginning of May, with many land troops, and with generals Cornwallis, Vaughan, and several others. Here they made their junction with general Clinton, who, from seniority, took the command in chief.

The obstinate resistance of the Virginians, and the disasters of the partisans of England in North Carolina, precluded all hope of success in these two provinces ; there remained therefore no other



advisable procedure but that of turning against South Carolina ; which expedition offered also this advantage, that the reduction of Charleston secured the conquest of the entire province.

Its inhabitants, struck with consternation at the loss of their capital, would never even think of attempting to defend an open country, exposed to the inroads of an active and disciplined enemy. Nor could the taking of Charleston be considered a difficult operation, this city being situated upon the very coast.

The plan being decided, the English prepared themselves for the execution. But the Carolinians had neglected nothing to secure themselves the means of defending their province, and particularly their capital. The chiefs of the people, as we have already related, had taken particular care to fortify Sullivan's Island, situated on the part of the sea, at the distance of six miles from the point of land formed by the confluence of the two rivers, Ashley and Cooper, and upon which the city of Charleston is built. This island so commands the channel which leads to the port, that the vessels which would enter it must pass under the cannon of fort Moultrie. It had recently been armed with thirty-six pieces of heavy cannon, and twenty-six of inferior caliber. The fort itself was constructed of a species of wood of the country, which the inhabitants denominated Palmetto, and is so spongy and soft, that the ball is deprived by it of its impetus, and lodges within it without causing splinters. The militia of all the province were called in haste to the defence of the city. In the space of a few days the garrison amounted to six thousand men, if not perfectly disciplined, at least full of ardor.

The regiment on pay, of South Carolina, was sent to guard fort Johnson, situated in James Island, three miles from Charleston, and which commanded the whole breadth of the channel.

The second and third regiments occupied Sullivan's Island. William Moultrie, who commanded the second regiment, was charged with the defence of the fort, which afterwards, from his gallant defence of it, was called by his name. The rest of the troops were distributed in the most important posts ; the roads which led to the sea were obstructed by abattis, the warehouses of the coast demolished, and intrenchments erected upon the shore.

There was not an inhabitant who had not in hand either arms or the spade, or the pickaxe. The blacks, who had been called in from the country, admirably seconded the whites in all the labors of fortification. The chief command belonged to general Lee, who possessed the entire confidence of the troops and of the people ; none rivalled him in devotion to the common cause. The hatred he had long borne towards the English government, the love of glory, and the desire of answering the universal expectation, continually excited his natural ardor. Rutledge, a man of great influence in the province, also manifested the most active zeal in animating the inhabit-

ants to defend themselves. His example and his exhortations obtained the most happy results. Every one was at his post, expecting the enemy with intrepid confidence. Meanwhile, the British fleet appeared, and cast anchor to the north of Sullivan's Island.

The ships of war were the *Bristol* and *Experiment* of fifty guns; four frigates, the *Active*, the *Acteon*, the *Solebay*, and the *Syren* of twenty-eight; the *Sphynx* of twenty, the *Friendship* of twenty-two, two smaller vessels of eight, and the *Thunder*, a bomb-ketch.

It was very difficult, especially for the large ships, to pass the bar which is found at the entrance of the channel of Charleston.

It was not without extreme fatigue that the English succeeded in crossing it with the *Bristol* and *Experiment*, even after they had lightened them of their artillery and a great part of their lading. They struck, and it was thought they would bilge immediately; but the skill of the officers and the efforts of the sailors at length preserved them. The intention of the English was to reduce fort Moultrie, in order, afterwards, to attack the city without obstacle. General Clinton issued a proclamation, which he sent into the city by a flag; he therein reminded the inhabitants of the subversion of all laws, of the tyranny established in the hands of the Congress, the committees, and other unconstitutional authorities; he gave them a last admonition, before proceeding to extremities; he exhorted them to avert from their heads, by a prompt return to obedience, the vengeance of a powerful and irritated nation. He offered pardon, at the same time, to all those who should lay down arms and submit immediately.

This summons produced no effect whatever.

The English generals had arranged their attack in the following manner. The ships were to cannonade fort Moultrie in front, while a corps of troops landed for this purpose in Long Island, to the east of Sullivan's Island, should cross the narrow arm of the sea that separates them, and which was believed fordable. This corps would then have pressed the fort on the part of the land, which was much less strongly fortified. This plan offered them so fair a prospect of success, that general Lee himself, having doubts whether the fort could be defended, recommended that it should be evacuated, and that all efforts should be concentrated for the defence of the city. But the inhabitants, who dreaded bombs out of measure, resolved to attempt, by all means, the defence of the fort.

All the preparations being completed on the one part, and on the other, on the morning of the twenty-eighth of June, the ketch *Thunder*, protected by another armed vessel, took post and began to throw bombs into fort Moultrie, while the rest of the squadron advanced.

About eleven o'clock, the *Bristol*, the *Experiment*, the *Active*, and the *Solebay*, having formed in line, opened a violent fire against the

fort. The Sphynx, the Acteon, and the Syren, went to take their station to the west, between the point of Sullivan's Island and the city, partly to be able to sweep the interior of the works, and partly to intercept all communication between the island and the main land, which would deprive the garrison of the means of retreat, prevent them from receiving succours of men and of munitions, and prohibit the Carolinians from annoying the besiegers by fire ships or other engines of war. The unskilfulness of the pilots caused the miscarriage of these dispositions; the three vessels struck upon a bank named the Middle Grounds, two of them, by the exertions of the mariners, were again set afloat, but not without having received considerable damage. Whether on account of the hour already become late, or in consequence of this damage, they were no longer in a situation to execute the orders of the captains. As to the Acteon, she was totally stranded, and, the next morning, burned. During this time, the four first vessels had kept up a furious cannonade against the fort, which was returned with equal vivacity. The *Thunder*, after having discharged upwards of sixty bombs, found herself so disabled, that she discontinued her fire; but the others maintained it; and if the attack was vigorous, the defence was not feeble. The English themselves were constrained to admire the intrepidity of the Americans in so hot an action.

The garrison of the fort, which consisted only in militia and a few soldiers of the line, displayed an incredible coolness and gallantry, in the service of their artillery, in the midst of the tempest of balls which was hailed upon them by the enemy's squadron. The Americans aimed with an extreme precision. The English ships suffered excessively; and their loss in men was not inconsiderable. The *Bristol*, especially, being damaged in all her rigging, was for some time so exposed to the fire of the batteries, that she narrowly escaped being sunk. Captain Morris, who commanded the Acteon, had already received several wounds, and the greater part of his men were killed; left almost alone upon the deck, he refused to be carried below, until a ball took off one of his legs, and then was removed without hope of life. The admiral himself, Peter Parker, received a severe contusion.

Lord Campbell, who a little before was governor of the province, was mortally wounded.

The loss of the garrison was very inconsiderable; nevertheless their fire slackened, and at length ceased altogether. Their ammunition was exhausted, and the English considered their victory as already secure. But the Americans soon succoured the fort, and the cannonade was renewed with the same fury as at first. It continued till seven o'clock in the evening.

The English then perceiving the inutility of their attack, and the deplorable state of their vessels, and not seeing the corps make its



appearance which was to have come up on the part of Long Island, determined to abandon the enterprise.

Generals Clinton and Cornwallis would have crossed the arm of the sea which separates the two neighboring islands, in order to attack Fort Moultrie on the land side, as it had been concerted, but the water was found too deep, and the ford impracticable ; this, at least, they alleged. On the other hand, even though they should have succeeded in surmounting these obstacles, it is probable they would have found others more formidable still upon the shores of Sullivan's Island. Colonel Thompson, at the head of three hundred grenadiers of his regiment ; colonel Clark, with two hundred soldiers of North Carolina ; colonel Horry, followed by two hundred militiamen of South Carolina, and Racoon's company of riflemen, with some pieces of artillery, had occupied the posts situated at the eastern extremity of the island. It is, therefore, credible, that it was more the preparations of defence made by the Americans, than the difficulty of the ford which prevented the English generals from attempting the passage. Can it be supposed that officers, so experienced, should have continued nine whole days in Long Island without having caused the depth of the waters to be sounded, and ascertaining long before the time of the action, whether they were fordable or not ?

It appears equally difficult to comprehend how, after having discovered either that the ford was impracticable, or the position of the Americans impregnable, the English should have remained inactive in Long Island, instead of endeavoring to land upon some other part of Sullivan's Island by means of the boats they had assembled. This circumstance presents several points which it is impossible to explain. However it may be, the English retired during the night, and the following morning their ships were already at the distance of two miles from the island. A few days after, having reembarked their troops, they made sail for New York, where the army, increased by all the reenforcements it had received from England, expected general Howe.

Such was the issue of the attack of Fort Moultrie by the English. It placed the affairs of South Carolina, for the present, in a state of security, The fort itself received little injury, either because the balls of the enemy passed above it, or because the spongy wood, of which it was constructed, diminished their effect.

This battle was remarkable on the side of the Americans for some of those traits of obstinate courage which are the usual result of the fermentation of minds in the midst of political revolutions. Among others, it is recorded, that a sergeant of grenadiers, named Jasper, on seeing the staff of the American standard cut by a ball, sprung after it to the ground, and fastened it to the rammer of a cannon ; then mounting upon the parapet, hoisted it anew in the midst of the most violent fire of the enemy. President Rutledge presented him with a sword, complimenting him highly and publicly.

Sergeant Macdonald, mortally wounded, and upon the point of expiring, continued to encourage his soldiers in the defence of country and of liberty. These examples of intrepidity were the object of great encomium in all the journals, and in all assemblies, both public and private.

These happy successes inflamed the minds of the Americans with new ardor. The event having demonstrated of what importance was Fort Moultrie, and on the other hand, how difficult it was to throw succours into it by way of the sea, it was resolved to unite Sullivan's Island to the continent by a bridge. This important work, notwithstanding all the obstacles it presented, was executed by general Gadsden, a zealous patriot, and one of the most distinguished men of the province. The Congress, by a special decree, voted their thanks to major-general Lee, to colonel Moultrie, to colonel Thompson, and to all the officers and soldiers who had displayed equal courage and patriotism in this memorable defence.

At this epoch, America was found in a strange situation, and actually unheard of till then. The war she had carried on with so much vigor, now, for more than a year, was directed against a king to whom she incessantly renewed her protestations of obedience; and the same men, who committed all the acts of rebellion, would by no means be called rebels. In all the tribunals, justice was still administered in the name of the king; and in the churches, prayers were continually repeated for the preservation and happiness of that prince, whose authority was not only entirely rejected, but also fought against with incredible obstinacy. It was declared to be the general wish to resume the ancient connection, to reestablish the original form of the royal government, whereas, in reality, the republican system had been long since introduced. A desire was pretended to arrive at one object, while all those means were resorted to which led to another absolutely opposite; in effect, in no revolution of state has there ever been observed so much incongruity between words and actions.

Such a state of things could not have duration; if the vulgar persuaded themselves that force of arms would reduce the government to bend before their will, enlightened citizens perceived, distinctly, that the wound was become incurable; and that it was hoped, in vain, to see the restoration of ancient ties between the colonies and the parent state. They well knew that the obstinacy of the British government was the fruit of pride, and that whatever success the Americans might obtain in the course of the war, they could never be of such a nature as to alarm this government for its own existence; the only extremity, however, that would be capable of inducing it to listen to a negotiation of accord.

The Americans could wage only a defensive war; and even supposing they should vanquish the armies of Great Britain, she would

always be able to renew the conflict. On the other hand, the mere loss of commerce with America, would not suffice to determine the government to accede to the conditions of the colonists, since all the other parts of the globe were open to it. Besides, great naval forces being the surest guaranty of the safety of commerce, that nation, whose marine shall have acquired an acknowledged superiority, will see its commerce increase and flourish under the protection of its flag. Nor should it be omitted, that however the principle of the quarrel seemed to consist in a struggle between limited monarchy and absolute monarchy, it now existed, in fact, only between the monarchy and the republic. The Americans, therefore, could have no other prospect but of entire liberty and independence; or of total dependence and servitude.

In this state of things, there was not a man endowed with penetration and experience, who did not perceive that an open and solemn declaration of the object it was desired to attain was the wisest, and even the only resolution the Americans could adopt. Their situation was not rendered by it more critical; it even offered immediate advantages, and still greater in perspective. Their counsels would thus acquire more firmness, a point essential to the success of such an enterprise, and foreign succours would become more easily attainable. It might then be believed that the colonists, after having solemnly proclaimed their independence, would combat to the last in its defence.

The apprehension of a sudden reconciliation no longer restraining foreign powers, they might openly succour them. And perhaps the pride of England would be less hurt, in case of reverse, at negotiating with the Americans as with an independent nation, than in submitting to the conditions which had been the first occasion of the quarrel; for war can have no result more bitter than that of compelling him that has waged it to give up to his enemy the very object in dispute. The course, therefore, which the Americans had to pursue, was no longer doubtful, and the Congress was not slow to perceive it. If the resolution was urgent, it could never be taken in circumstances more propitious, or under auspices more favorable. The success of the arms of the patriots in Massachusetts, Virginia and South Carolina, provinces of such chief importance; the prosperity of their first maritime enterprises; and the multitude of prizes taken from the enemy by their privateers, inspired a well grounded hope, that whatever should be decreed by the Congress would have the concurrence of all America. The terror of the English arms had diminished in the minds of all, in proportion to the increase of confidence in the national forces; the union of the different provinces became more intimate; the ill success of the loyalists, in their first attempts, had discouraged them, and caused them to be looked upon by the patriots as enemies little to be feared. But if this party was impotent in arms,



they neglected not to resort to plots, the immediate effect of which was to redouble the animosity of the patriots against a government, that not content, as they said, with employing force, also hired incendiaries and assassins to practice their horrible arts against innocent cities, and the most virtuous citizens.

Certain loyalists of New York, gained and instigated, as it was rumored, by governor Tryon, had formed a conspiracy, the object of which was to arrest, and perhaps to murder, general Washington and the other principal officers; to set fire to the magazines, and to occupy all the avenues of the city at the moment when the British troops, that were expected, should have presented themselves before it. The plot having been discovered, many individuals, who had been concerned in it, were seized, among others, two of the general's guards, and his steward himself; some were executed.

The horrible project of setting fire to so considerable a city, and attempting the life of a man to whom the people bore so much reverence and love, transported the patriots with indignation. They demanded, with loud cries, to be liberated forever from the power of a government which, according to the general opinion, gave wages to such infamous assassins. England herself, by her public acts, precipitated the moment of this total separation.

The discourse held by the king to the parliament had persuaded the Americans that nothing would be remitted of the measures of rigor adopted against them, and consequently that their preparations of war could not be too formidable.

The discussions and decisions of parliament, disclosed to them the impotence of those who attempted to defend their cause. But the act of the fifteenth of May, which abandoned American property, private as well as public, to those who could find the way to seize it, had thoroughly apprised the colonists that it was resolved not only to exercise against them the extremes of hostility, but that it was intended to violate, with respect to them, all the principles of those laws which, among civilised nations, still plead for humanity even in the midst of carnage and devastation. In a word, they no longer doubted but that the English ministry was determined to organise against them a system of piracy and robbery. No foreign nation, when their enemy, had ever perpetrated such excesses; much less could they endure them on the part of their own fellow-citizens. But was it possible still to give this name to enemies who no longer observed any measure? Affection, which has its source in the ties of blood and political union, can no longer exist, when not only the laws in use among friendly nations, but even usages respected by civilised people in the midst of the most cruel discords, have been trampled under foot. And if the English resolved to wage a war of barbarians against America, the least that could follow was, that the latter should view them as foreigners.

The resolution taken by England to employ, and send against the Americans, the mercenary troops of Germany, whom the colonists looked upon as men devoid of all humanity, had produced the most violent impression upon their minds. From this moment they abjured all sentiment of consanguinity towards a people who sent against their children such cruel executors of their will. 'Behold then,' they cried, 'the ministers of peace, the negotiators that England sends us! The soldiers of the princes of Hesse, of Brunswick, and of Waldeck! The devastations, the massacres, the implacable fury of these hireling Germans, the horrible barbarities of the Indian savages, such are the instruments the British government employs to vanquish our constancy, and subject us anew to its yoke! The English arm foreigners against us; then let us combat the English themselves, as if they were foreigners. Their laws, no less cruel than their soldiers, have severed all our ties; have despoiled us even of the hope to reunite them; wherefore, then, do we still hesitate to adopt a resolution, which if at first it appeared to us painful and prejudicial, every thing now demonstrates to be useful and even necessary?'

It is certain, that the very measures from which the ministers expected the return of the Americans to submission, served but to redouble their obstinacy, and furnished new arms to the Congress, and to all the partisans of independence.

Even the greater part of those who had professed contrary opinions, were seen to join with them, or at least to manifest an extreme indifference for the interests of England. Her enemies increased every day in number and hardness; and every day her friends lost their influence and their zeal. A memorable example for those who, in their blind precipitation, imagine that measures proper to divide men, and to arm them against one another when they are cool, will produce the same effect when they are animated by some violent passion! Then what should appease, irritates; what should intimidate, encourages; and what should divide, assembles and unites. The desire of independence insinuated itself little by little into the minds of all. In public, particularly, the haraugues had no other object; the general attention was fixed upon events. At this epoch appeared a writing entitled *Common Sense*; it was the production of Thomas Paine, born in England, and arrived not long before in America. No writer, perhaps, ever possessed, in a higher degree, the art of moving and guiding the multitude at his will. It may be affirmed, in effect, that this work was one of the most powerful instruments of American independence.

The author endeavored, with very plausible arguments, to demonstrate that the opposition of parties, the diversity of interests, the arrogance of the British government, and its ardent thirst of vengeance, rendered all reconciliation impossible. On the other hand, he enlarged upon the necessity, utility, and possibility of independence.

He omitted not to sprinkle his pamphlet with declamations calculated to render monarchy odious to the people, and to inspire them with the desire of a republic. The excellency of the English constitution had never till then been called in question; Paine criticised it very freely in the part which relates to the royal power; but praised its other institutions. He painted all the calamities which had weighed upon England, notwithstanding the much extolled goodness of its constitution, especially since the reestablishment of monarchy; thence he inferred that it contained some essential vice which opposed the happiness of the people; and this lurking defect he affirmed was royalty.

To this he attributed intestine discords, and the frequency of foreign wars; he congratulated the Americans that heaven had placed it in their power to create a constitution that should embrace all the excellencies of that of England without any of its defects; and thus, again, he intimated the exclusion of royalty. The success of this writing of Paine cannot be described.

The vehemence of opinions redoubled in the minds of all; even loyalists were seen to declare for liberty; an unanimous cry arose for independence.

The Congress determined to seize the opportunity. But to proceed with prudence, they wished first to sound the minds of the people by passing a resolution, which, if it was not independence itself, evidently led to it. They intended to observe its effects, in order to govern their subsequent conduct accordingly. They decreed, that whereas the British king, in conjunction with the lords and commons of Great Britain, had, by the late acts of parliament, excluded the united colonies from the protection of his crown; and whereas no answer had been, or probably would be, given to their humble petitions for the repeal of the obnoxious laws, and for a reconciliation with Great Britain; that, on the contrary, all the force of that realm, with the aid of mercenary foreigners, was to be employed for the destruction of the good people of the colonies; and finally, whereas it is contrary to sound reason, and to the consciences of this people, to take the oaths and make the engagements necessary to the assumption and exercise of offices under the crown of Great Britain; and it is necessary that the exercise of every authority, proceeding from the said crown, should be totally annulled, and all the powers of government exercised under the authority of the good people of the colonies; and this in order to maintain internal peace, good morals, and public order, as well as to defend their lives, liberty, and property, from the assaults and cruel rapine of their enemies; therefore it was recommended to the respective assemblies and conventions of the united colonies, where no government suited to the exigency of affairs had till then been constituted, that they should establish such governments, as according to the opinion of the representatives of



the people, should be most conducive to the happiness and security of their constituents, and of America in general. This resolution of Congress being rapidly notified to all the colonies, encountered among them, respectively, a different reception. Some had already anticipated it, and, assuming the powers of government, had created institutions independent of the crown, and these no longer temporary, as at first, but stable, and subject to no limitation of time or of condition. Thus Virginia and South Carolina had proceeded. Connecticut and Rhode Island needed no change; since there, from the earliest times, every authority originated in the people, by whom all public officers were chosen, as well those to whom were entrusted the legislative, as those who exercised the executive powers. Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York, hesitated; but at length yielded to the necessity of the times. Thus the people of the colonies set about framing new constitutions; but, with the exception of the parts which relate to regal authority, all preserved those forms which are peculiar and appropriate to the English constitution.

The three powers, legislative, executive and judiciary, were carefully separated from each other; and great jealousy was manifested of the executive.

In some colonies, the legislature was divided into two branches; in others it formed but one corps; but in all, those who held offices of trust or power under the executive were excluded. The judges were paid either by the legislature or by the executive. In some their tenure of office was for a limited period, in others during good behavior. The governors were elected for a longer or shorter term of time, according to the greater or less jealousy of the people. In some colonies they possessed the right of *veto*; in others not. Here the governor was made responsible for all his acts, there for none, because he was subject to the decisions of an executive council. In all these deliberations, so important to the happiness of the united colonies, no threats, discord, or reproaches, were heard; and it appeared as if all, laying aside ambition, aspired to nothing but the prosperity and liberty of their country. A memorable example of prudence, moderation, and concord! Let other nations reflect on this and blush, for having acted in all times so differently from the Americans; if, indeed, corruption of morals has left still the power of blushing to those who rush from conflicts of opinion to discord, and from discord to the effusion of blood.

The Congress had found all minds disposed to adopt the resolution they meditated; but to accomplish the work they had commenced, it was requisite that they should be formally authorised by the colonies to proclaim independence.

This great business was conducted with so much prudence, and the people were so much inclined to favor the design, that the greater part of the provincial assemblies invested their representatives in

Congress with full powers to carry it into effect. Some also authorised them to conclude alliances with foreign princes. Pennsylvania and Maryland alone remained in opposition.

Such was the state of things, when in the sitting of Congress of the eighth of June, a motion having been made to declare independence, Richard Henry Lee, one of the deputies from Virginia, spoke as follows, and was heard with profound attention;

‘I know not, whether among all the civil discords which have been recorded by historians, and which have been excited either by the love of liberty in the people, or by the ambition of princes, there has ever been presented a deliberation more interesting or more important than that which now engages our attention; whether we consider the future destiny of this free and virtuous people, or that of our enemies themselves, who, notwithstanding their tyranny and this cruel war, are still our brethren, and descended from a common stock; or finally, that of the other nations of the globe, whose eyes are intent upon this great spectacle, and who anticipate from our success more freedom for themselves, or from our defeat apprehend heavier chains and a severer bondage. For the question is not whether we shall acquire an increase of territorial dominion, or wickedly wrest from others their just possessions; but whether we shall preserve, or lose forever, that liberty which we have inherited from our ancestors, which we have pursued across tempestuous seas, and which we have defended in this land against barbarous men, ferocious beasts, and an inclement sky. And if so many and distinguished praises have always been lavished upon the generous defenders of Greek and of Roman liberty, what will be said of us who defend a liberty which is founded not upon the capricious will of an unstable multitude, but upon immutable statutes and tutelary laws; not that which was the exclusive privilege of a few patricians, but that which is the property of all; not that which was stained by iniquitous ostracisms, or the horrible decimation of armies, but that which is pure, temperate, and gentle, and conformed to the civilisation of the present age. Why then do we longer procrastinate, and wherefore are these delays? Let us complete the enterprise already so well commenced; and since our union with England can no longer consist with that liberty and peace which are our chief delight, let us dissolve these fatal ties, and conquer forever that good which we already enjoy; an entire and absolute independence.

‘But ought I not to begin by observing, that if we have reached that violent extremity, beyond which nothing can any longer exist between America and England, but either such war or such peace as are made between foreign nations, this can only be imputed to the insatiable cupidity, the tyrannical proceedings, and the outrages, for ten years reiterated, of the British ministers. What have we not done to restore peace, to reestablish harmony? Who has not heard

our prayers, and who is ignorant of our supplications? They have wearied the universe. England alone was deaf to our complaints, and wanted that compassion towards us which we have found among all other nations. And as at first our forbearance, and then our resistance, have proved equally insufficient, since our prayers were unavailing, as well as the blood lately shed; we must go further, and proclaim our independence. Nor let any one believe that we have any other option left. The time will certainly come when the fated separation must take place, whether you will or no; for so it is decreed by the very nature of things, the progressive increase of our population, the fertility of our soil, the extent of our territory, the industry of our countrymen, and the immensity of the ocean which separates the two states. And if this be true, as it is most true, who does not see that the sooner it takes place the better; and that it would be not only imprudent, but the height of folly, not to seize the present occasion, when British injustice has filled all hearts with indignation, inspired all minds with courage, united all opinions in one, and put arms in every hand? And how long must we traverse three thousand miles of a stormy sea, to go and solicit of arrogant and insolent men, either counsels or commands to regulate our domestic affairs? Does it not become a great, rich, and powerful nation, as we are, to look at home, and not abroad, for the government of its own concerns? And how can a ministry of strangers judge, with any discernment, of our interests, when they know not, and when it little imports them to know, what is good for us, and what is not? The past justice of the British ministers should warn us against the future, if they should ever seize us again in their cruel claws. Since it has pleased our barbarous enemies to place before us the alternative of slavery or of independence, where is the generous minded man and the lover of his country, who can hesitate to choose? With these perfidious men no promise is secure, no pledges sacred. Let us suppose, which heaven avert, that we are conquered; let us suppose an accommodation. What assurance have we of the British moderation in victory, or good faith in treaty? Is it their having enlisted and let loose against us the ferocious Indians, and the merciless soldiers of Germany? Is it that faith, so often pledged and so often violated in the course of the present contest; this British faith, which is reputed more false than Punic? We ought rather to expect, that when we shall have fallen naked and unarmed into their hands, they will wreak upon us their fury and their vengeance; they will load us with heavier chains, in order to deprive us not only of the power, but even of the hope of again recovering our liberty. But I am willing to admit, although it is a thing without example, that the British government will forget past offences and perform its promises, can we imagine, that after so long dissensions, after so many outrages, so many combats, and so much bloodshed, our reconciliation could be durable, and that every



day, in the midst of so much hatred and rancor, would not afford some fresh subject of animosity? The two nations are already separated in interest and affections; the one is conscious of its ancient strength, the other has become acquainted with its newly exerted force; the one desires to rule in an arbitrary manner, the other will not obey even if allowed its privileges. In such a state of things, what peace, what concord, can be expected. The Americans may become faithful friends to the English, but subjects, never. And even though union could be restored without rancor, it could not without danger. The wealth and power of Great Britain should inspire prudent men with fears for the future. Having reached such a height of grandeur that she has no longer any thing to dread from foreign powers, in the security of peace the spirit of her people will decay, manners will be corrupted, her youth will grow up in the midst of vice, and in this state of degeneration, England will become the prey of a foreign enemy, or an ambitious citizen. If we remain united with her, we shall partake of her corruptions and misfortunes, the more to be dreaded as they will be irreparable; separated from her, on the contrary, as we are, we should neither have to fear the seductions of peace nor the dangers of war. By a declaration of our freedom, the perils would not be increased; but we should add to the ardor of our defenders, and to the splendor of victory. Let us then take a firm step, and escape from this labyrinth; we have assumed the sovereign power, and dare not confess it; we disobey a king, and acknowledge ourselves his subjects; wage war against a people, on whom we incessantly protest our desire to depend. What is the consequence of so many inconsistencies? Hesitation paralyses all our measures; the way we ought to pursue, is not marked out; our generals are neither respected nor obeyed; our soldiers have neither confidence nor zeal; feeble at home, and little considered abroad, foreign princes can neither esteem nor succour so timid and wavering a people. But independence once proclaimed, and our object avowed, more manly and decided measures will be adopted; all minds will be fired by the greatness of the enterprise, the civil magistrates will be inspired with new zeal, the generals with fresh ardor, and the citizens with greater constancy, to attain so high and so glorious a destiny. There are some who seem to dread the effects of this resolution. But will England, or can she, manifest against us greater vigor and rage than she has already displayed? She deems resistance against oppression no less rebellion than independence itself. And where are those formidable troops that are to subdue the Americans? What the English could not do, can it be done by Germans? Are they more brave, or better disciplined? The number of our enemies is increased; but our own is not diminished, and the battles we have sustained have given us the practice of arms and the experience of war. Who doubts then, that a declaration of inde-

pendence will procure us allies? All nations are desirous of procuring, by commerce, the productions of our exuberant soil; they will visit our ports, hitherto closed by the monopoly of insatiable England. They are no less eager to contemplate the reduction of her hated power; they all loathe her barbarous dominion; their succours will evince to our brave countrymen the gratitude they bear them for having been the first to shake the foundations of this Colossus. Foreign princes wait only for the extinction of all hazard of reconciliation to throw off their present reserve. If this measure is useful, it is no less becoming our dignity. America has arrived at a degree of power which assigns her a place among independent nations; we are not less entitled to it than the English themselves. If they have wealth, so also have we; if they are brave, so are we; if they are more numerous, our population, through the incredible fruitfulness of our chaste wives, will soon equal theirs; if they have men of renown as well in peace as in war, we likewise have such; political revolutions usually produce great, brave, and generous spirits. From what we have already achieved in these painful beginnings, it is easy to presume what we shall hereafter accomplish; for experience is the source of sage counsels, and liberty is the mother of great men. Have you not seen the enemy driven from Lexington by thirty thousand citizens armed and assembled in one day? Already their most celebrated generals have yielded in Boston to the skill of ours; already their seamen, repulsed from our coasts, wander over the ocean, where they are the sport of tempest, and the prey of famine. Let us hail the favorable omen, and fight not for the sake of knowing on what terms we are to be the slaves of England, but to secure to ourselves a free existence, to found a just and independent government. Animated by liberty, the Greeks repulsed the innumerable army of Persians; sustained by the love of independence, the Swiss and the Dutch humbled the power of Austria by memorable defeats, and conquered a rank among nations. But the sun of America also shines upon the heads of the brave; the point of our weapons is no less formidable than theirs; here also the same union prevails, the same contempt of dangers and of death in asserting the cause of country.

‘Why then do we longer delay, why still deliberate? Let this most happy day give birth to the American republic. Let her arise, not to devastate and conquer, but to reestablish the reign of peace and of the laws. The eyes of Europe are fixed upon us; she demands of us a living example of freedom, that may contrast, by the felicity of the citizens, with the ever increasing tyranny which desolates her polluted shores. She invites us to prepare an asylum where the unhappy may find solace, and the persecuted repose. She entreats us to cultivate a propitious soil, where that generous plant which first sprung up and grew in England, but is now withered

by the poisonous blasts of Scottish tyranny, may revive and flourish, sheltering under its salubrious and interminable shade all the unfortunate of the human race. This is the end presaged by so many omens, by our first victories, by the present ardor and union, by the flight of Howe, and the pestilence which broke out amongst Dunmore's people, by the very winds which baffled the enemy's fleets and transports, and that terrible tempest which engulfed seven hundred vessels upon the coasts of Newfoundland. If we are not this day wanting in our duty to country, the names of the American legislators will be placed, by posterity, at the side of those of Theseus, of Lycurgus, of Romulus, of Numa, of the three Williams of Nassau, and of all those whose memory has been, and will be, forever dear to virtuous men and good citizens.'

Lee had scarcely ceased speaking, when no dubious signs of approbation were manifested on all parts. But the deputies of Pennsylvania and Maryland not being present, and the Congress desirous, by some delay, to evidence the maturity of their deliberations, adjourned the further consideration of the subject to the first of July. Meanwhile, the patriots labored strenuously to induce the two dissenting provinces also to decide for independence. They employed the most earnest persuasions, to which they added also threats, intimating that not only would the other colonies exclude them from the confederation, but that they would immediately treat them as enemies. The provincial assembly of Pennsylvania remained inflexible. At length, the inhabitants of Pennsylvania formed a convention, in which the debates and disputes upon the question of independence were many and vehement.

John Dickinson, one of the deputies of the province to the general Congress, a man of prompt genius, of extensive influence, and one of the most zealous partisans of American liberty, restricted however to the condition of union with England, harangued, it is said, in the following manner against independence.

'It too often happens, fellow-citizens, that men, heated by the spirit of party, give more importance in their discourses to the surface and appearance of objects, than either to reason or justice; thus evincing that their aim is not to appease tumults, but to excite them; not to repress the passions, but to inflame them; not to compose ferocious discords, but to exasperate and embitter them more and more. They aspire but to please the powerful, to gratify their own ambition, to flatter the caprices of the multitude, in order to captivate their favor. Accordingly, in popular commotions, the party of wisdom and of equity is commonly found in the minority; and perhaps it would be safer, in difficult circumstances, to consult the smaller instead of the greater number. Upon this principle I invite the attention of those who hear me, since my opinion may differ from that of the majority; but I dare believe it will be shared



by all impartial and moderate citizens, who condemn this tumultuous proceeding, this attempt to coerce our opinions, and to drag us with so much precipitation to the most serious and important of decisions. But coming to the subject in controversy, I affirm, that prudent men do not abandon objects which are certain, to go in pursuit of those which offer only uncertainty. Now it is an established fact, that America can be well and happily governed by the English laws, under the same king, and the same parliament. Two hundred years of happiness furnish the proof of it ; and we find it also in the present prosperity which is the result of these venerable laws and of this ancient union. It is not as independent, but as subjects ; not as republic, but as monarchy ; that we have arrived at this degree of power and of greatness.

‘What then is the object of these chimeras hatched in the days of discord and war ? Shall the transports of fury have more power over us than the experience of ages ? Shall we destroy, in a moment of anger, the work cemented and tested by time ?

‘I know the name of liberty is dear to each one of us ; but have we not enjoyed liberty even under the English monarchy ? Shall we this day renounce that, to go and seek it in I know not what form of republic, which will soon change into a licentious anarchy and popular tyranny ? In the human body the head only sustains and governs all the members, directing them, with admirable harmony, to the same object, which is self-preservation and happiness ; so the head of the body politic, that is the king in concert with the parliament, can alone maintain the union of the members of this empire, lately so flourishing, and prevent civil war by obviating all the evils produced by variety of opinions and diversity of interests. And so firm is my persuasion of this, that I fully believe the most cruel war which Great Britain could make upon us, would be that of not making any ; and that the surest means of bringing us back to her obedience, would be that of employing none. For the dread of the English arms once removed, provinces would rise up against provinces, and cities against cities ; and we should be seen to turn against ourselves the arms we have taken up to combat the common enemy.

‘Insurmountable necessity would then compel us to resort to the tutelary authority which we should have rashly abjured, and if it consented to receive us again under its Egis, it would be no longer as free citizens, but as slaves. Still inexperienced, and in our infancy, what proof have we given of our ability to walk without a guide ? none ; and if we judge of the future by the past, we must conclude that our concord will continue as long as the danger, and no longer.

‘Even when the powerful hand of England supported us, for the paltry motives of territorial limits and distant jurisdictions, have we not abandoned ourselves to discords, and sometimes even to vio-

lence? And what must we not expect now that minds are heated, ambitions roused, and arms in the hands of all?

‘If, therefore, our union with England offers us so many advantages for the maintenance of internal peace, it is no less necessary to procure us with foreign powers that condescension and respect which is so essential to the prosperity of our commerce, to the enjoyment of any consideration, and to the accomplishment of any enterprise. Hitherto in our intercourse with the different nations of the world, England has lent us the support of her name and of her arms; we have presented ourselves in all the ports and in all the cities of the globe, not as Americans, a people scarcely heard of, but as English; under the shadow of this respected name, every port was open to us, every way was smooth, every demand was heard with favor. From the moment when our separation shall take place, every thing will assume a contrary direction. The nations will accustom themselves to look upon us with disdain; even the pirates of Africa and Europe will fall upon our vessels, will massacre our seamen, or lead them into a cruel and perpetual slavery.

‘There is in the human species, often so inexplicable in their affections, a manifest propensity to oppress the feeble as well as to flatter the powerful. Fear always carries it against reason, pride against moderation, and cruelty against clemency.

‘Independence, I am aware, has attractions for all mankind; but I maintain, that in the present quarrel the friends of independence are the promoters of slavery, and that those who desire to separate us, would but render us more dependent; if independence means the right of commanding, and not the necessity of obeying, and if being dependent is to obey, and not to command, If in rendering ourselves independent of England, supposing, however, that we should be able to effect it, we might be so at the same time of all other nations, I should applaud the project; but to change the condition of English subjects for that of slaves to the whole world, is a step that could only be counselled by insanity. If you would reduce yourselves to the necessity of obeying, in all things, the mandates of supercilious France, who is now kindling fire under our feet, declare yourselves independent. If to British liberty you prefer the liberty of Holland, of Venice, of Genoa, or of Ragusa, declare yourselves independent. But if we would not change the signification of words, let us preserve and carefully maintain this dependence, which has been down to this very hour the principle and source of our prosperity, of our liberty, of our real independence.

‘But here I am interrupted, and told that no one questions the advantages which America derived at first from her conjunction with England; but that the new pretensions of the ministers have changed all, have subverted all. If I should deny that, for the last twelve years, the English government has given the most fatal direction to

the affairs of the colonies, and that its measures towards us savor of tyranny, I should deny not only what is the manifest truth, but even what I have so often advanced and supported. But is there any doubt that it already feels a secret repentance? These arms, these soldiers, it prepares against us, are not designed to establish tyranny upon our shores, but to vanquish our obstinacy, and compel us to subscribe to conditions of accommodation. In vain is it asserted that the ministry will employ all means to make themselves quite sure of us, in order to exercise upon us, with impunity, all the rigor of their power; for to pretend to reduce us to an absolute impossibility of resistance in cases of oppression, would be, on their part, a chimerical project. The distance of the seat of government, the vast extent of intervening seas, the continual increase of our population, our warlike spirit, our experience in arms, the lakes, the rivers, the forests, the defiles which abound in our territory. are our pledges that England will always prefer to found her power upon moderation and liberty, rather than upon rigor and oppression. An uninterrupted succession of victories and of triumphs could alone constrain England to acknowledge American independence; which, whether we can expect, whoever knows the instability of fortune can easily judge.

‘If we have combated successfully at Lexington and at Boston, Quebec and all Canada have witnessed our reverses. Every one sees the necessity of opposing the extraordinary pretensions of the ministers; but does every body see also that of fighting for independence?’

‘It is to be feared, that by changing the object of the war, the present harmony will be interrupted, that the ardor of the people will be chilled by apprehensions for their new situation. By substituting a total dismemberment to the revocation of the laws we complain of, we should fully justify the ministers; we should merit the infamous name of rebels, and all the British nation would arm, with an unanimous impulse, against those who, from oppressed and complaining subjects, should have become all at once irreconcilable enemies. The English cherish the liberty we defend; they respect the dignity of our cause; but they will blame, they will detest, our recourse to independence, and will unite with one consent to combat us.

‘The propagators of the new doctrine are pleased to assure us that, out of jealousy towards England, foreign sovereigns will lavish their succours upon us; as if these sovereigns could sincerely applaud rebellion; as if they had not colonies, even here in America, in which it is important for them to maintain obedience and tranquillity. Let us suppose, however, that jealousy, ambition, or vengeance, should triumph over the fear of insurrections; do you think these princes will not make you pay dear for the assistance with which they flatter you? Who has not learnt, to his cost, the perfidy and the cupidity of Europeans? They will disguise their avarice under pompous



words; under the most benevolent pretexts they will despoil us of our territories, they will invade our fisheries and obstruct our navigation, they will attempt our liberty and our privileges. We shall learn too late what it costs to trust in those European flatteries, and to place that confidence in inveterate enemies which has been withdrawn from long tried friends.

‘There are many persons who, to gain their ends, extol the advantages of a republic over monarchy. I will not here undertake to examine which of these two forms of government merits the preference. I know, however, that the English nation, after having tried them both, has never found repose except in monarchy. I know, also, that in popular republics themselves, so necessary is monarchy to cement human society, it has been requisite to institute monarchical powers, more or less extensive, under the names of *Archons*, of *Consuls*, of *Doges*, of *Gonfaloniers*, and finally of *Kings*. Nor should I here omit an observation, the truth of which appears to me incontestable; the English constitution seems to be the fruit of the experience of all anterior time; in which monarchy is so tempered, that the monarch finds himself checked in his efforts to seize absolute power; and the authority of the people is so regulated, that anarchy is not to be feared. But for us it is to be apprehended, that when the counterpoise of monarchy shall no longer exist, the democratic power may carry all before it, and involve the whole state in confusion and ruin. Then an ambitious citizen may arise, seize the reins of power, and annihilate liberty forever; for such is the ordinary career of ill balanced democracies, they fall into anarchy, and thence under despotism.

‘Such are the opinions which might have been offered you with more eloquence, but assuredly not with more zeal or sincerity. May heaven grant that such sinister forebodings be not one day accomplished! May it not permit that, in this solemn concourse of the friends of country, the impassioned language of presumptuous and ardent men should have more influence than the pacific exhortations of good and sober citizens; prudence and moderation found and preserve empires, temerity and presumption occasion their downfall.’

The discourse of Dickinson was heard with attention; but the current flowed irresistibly strong in a contrary direction, and fear acting upon many more powerfully even than their opinion, the majority pronounced in favor of independence. The deputies of Pennsylvania were accordingly authorised to return to Congress, and to consent that the confederate colonies should declare themselves free and independent states.

The formal opposition of Dickinson caused him to be excluded. The same things took place in Maryland; this province, feeble by itself, and situated in the midst of the others, also empowered its deputies to resume their seats in Congress, and to approve independ-

ence. Consequently, the fourth of July, 1776, upon the report of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Philip Livingston, the thirteen confederate colonies dissolved all their allegiance towards the British crown, and declared themselves free and independent, under the name of the thirteen *United States of America*. The manifesto which the Congress caused to be published to justify their resolution in the sight of all mankind, was attributed particularly to Jefferson; it was drawn up with great energy of style and argument. The writers of the time bestowed the highest encomiums on this declaration, which laid the foundation of the independence of a rich and powerful nation.

It commenced with these words;

‘When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature’s God entitle them, a decent regard to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

‘We hold these truths to be self evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organising its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future felicity. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government.’

After an exact enumeration of the wrongs received, and of the oppression sustained, it was added, that ‘a prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.’ Then having recounted the public appeals made at different times to the English people, their constant refusal to hear the voice of justice and of consanguinity, the manifesto concluded with these words;

‘We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

‘We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.’\*

Such was this famous declaration of the independence of the United States of America, which, if it was necessary, as it appears to have been, was not, however, exempt from peril. For although the greater part of the Americans perceived that the course of things must have led them to this extremity, there were still many who openly manifested contrary sentiments. They were unfortunately more numerous in the provinces menaced by the English than in any other. The American armies were feeble, the treasury poor, foreign succours uncertain, and the ardor of the people might abate all at once.

It was known that England was determined to exert all her forces for the reduction of the colonies, before they should have time to become confirmed in their rebellion; or to form alliances with foreign powers. If the American arms, as there was but too much reason to fear, should prove unfortunate in the ensuing campaign, it could not be disguised that the people would lay it to the charge of independence; and that according to the ordinary movement of the human mind, they would rapidly retrograde towards the opinions they had abjured. When despair once begins, the prostration of energy follows as its immediate consequence. But the war was inevitable, all arrangement impossible, and the Congress urged by necessity to take a decisive resolution. On every side they saw dangers, but they preferred to brave them for the attainment of a determinate object, rather than trust any longer to the uncertain hope of the repeal of the laws against which they were in arms.

For it was even difficult to designate which of these laws were to be revoked. Some desired to have all those repealed which had

\* See Note I.



been passed since the year 1763 ; others only proscribed a part of them ; and there were still others whom a total abrogation would not have satisfied, and who wished also for the abolition of some ancient statutes. In the heat of debates, propositions had been advanced to which it was impossible that Great Britain should ever consent. Nor can it be denied that the declaration of independence was conformable to the nature of things. Circumstances would not have endured much longer that a people like that of America, numerous, wealthy, warlike, and accustomed to liberty, should depend upon another, at a great distance, and little superior in power. The English ministry could not shut their eyes upon it ; and such was perhaps the secret reason of their obduracy in attempting to load the Americans with heavier chains. It is also certain that foreign princes would not have consented to succour, or to receive into their alliance, a people who acknowledged themselves the subjects of another power ; whereas it might be expected, that they would unite their efforts to those of a nation determined, at all hazards, to obtain the recognition of its liberty and independence. In the first case, even victory would not have given allies to the Americans ; in the second, they were assured of them only by showing themselves resolved to sustain their cause with arms in hand.

However this may be, it is certain that the declaration was received by the people with transports of joy. Nor were any of those public demonstrations omitted which governments are accustomed to employ, on similar occasions, to conciliate the favor of the people to their determinations. Independence was proclaimed, with great solemnity, at Philadelphia, the eighth of July. The artillery was fired, bonfires were kindled ; the people seemed actually delirious with exultation. On the eleventh, the manifesto of Congress was published in New York, and was read to each brigade of the American army, which, at that time, was assembled in the vicinity of the city ; it was received with universal acclamations. The same evening the statue of king George III., which had been erected in 1770, was taken down and dragged through the streets by the sons of liberty. It was decided, that the lead of which it was composed, should be converted into musket balls. These excesses, however blameable in themselves, were not without utility if considered politically ; they excited the people and hurried them on to the object that was desired. At Baltimore, independence having been proclaimed in the presence of cannoniers and militia, the people could not contain their enthusiasm. The air resounded with salutes of artillery, and the shouts that hailed the freedom and happiness of the United States of America. The effigy of the king became the sport of the populace, and was afterwards burnt in the public square.

The rejoicings at Boston were the greatest of all. Independence was there proclaimed from the balcony of the State house, in the presence of all the authorities, civil and military, and of an immense concourse of people, as well from the city itself as from the country. The garrison was drawn up in order of battle in King street, which from that moment took the name of State street ; the troops formed in thirteen detachments, to denote the thirteen United States. At a given signal, a salute of thirteen cannon was fired upon Fort Hill, which was immediately answered by an equal number from the batteries of the Castle, of the Neck, of Nantasket, and of Point Alderton. The garrison, in their turn, fired thirteen salutes of musketry, each detachment firing in succession. The authorities and most considerable inhabitants then convened at a banquet prepared in the council chamber, when they drank toasts to the perpetuity and prosperity of the United States, to the American Congress, to general Washington, to the success of the arms of the confederacy, to the destruction of tyrants, to the propagation of civil and religious liberty, to the friends of the United States in all parts of the world. All the bells rung in token of felicitation ; the joy was universal, and its demonstrations were incessantly renewed. In the evening, all the ensigns of royalty, lions, sceptres or crowns, whether sculptured or painted, were torn in pieces and burnt in State street.

But in Virginia, it would be impossible to describe the exultation that was manifested.

The Virginian convention decreed that the name of the king should be suppressed in all the public prayers. They ordained that the great seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia should represent Virtue as the tutelary genius of the province, robed in drapery of an Amazon, resting one hand upon her lance, and holding with the other a sword, trampling upon tyranny, under the figure of a prostrate man, having near him a crown fallen from his head, and bearing in one hand a broken chain, and in the other a scourge. At foot was charactered the word Virginia, and round the effigy of Virtue was inscribed—*Sic semper tyrannis*. The reverse represented a group of figures ; in the middle stood Liberty with her wand and cap ; on one side was Ceres, with the horn of plenty in the right hand, and a sheaf of wheat in the left ; upon the other appeared Eternity, with the globe and the phoenix. At foot were found these words—*Deus nobis hæc otia fecit*.

In the midst of these transports, nothing was forgotten that might tend to inspire the people with affection for the new order of things, and a violent hatred, not only towards tyranny, but also against monarchy ; the republicans using all their address to confound the one with the other as eternally inseparable by their essence.

Thus, on the one hand, the American patriots, by their secret manœuvres, and then by a daring resolution ; and on the other, the

British ministers, at first by oppressive laws, and afterwards by hesitating counsels and the employment of an inadequate force, gave origin to a crisis which eventually produced the entire dismemberment of a splendid and powerful empire. So constant are men in the pursuits of liberty ; and so obstinate in ambition. But also so timid are they in their resolutions, and ever more prompt to warn their enemy of his danger by threats, than to overwhelm him by force.

It is certain that the English ministers wanted either sagacity to foresee the evil, or energy to remedy it. The tumults of America broke out unobserved, and grew without obstacle, till at length, swoln like an overflowing river, they acquired such an impetuosity as to sweep before them the impotent dikes with which it was attempted too late to oppose them.

END OF BOOK SIXTH.



# NOTE TO BOOK VI.

NOTE I.—PAGE 331.

THE MEMBERS WHO COMPOSED THE CONGRESS, AND WHO  
ALL SIGNED THE DECLARATION, ARE THE FOLLOWING ;

---

JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*

## NEW HAMPSHIRE.

JOSIAH BARTLETT,  
WILLIAM WHIPPLE,  
MATTHEW THORNTON.

## MASSACHUSETTS.

SAMUEL ADAMS,  
JOHN ADAMS,  
ROBERT TREAT PAINE,  
ELBRIDGE GERRY.

## RHODE ISLAND.

STEPHEN HOPKINS,  
WILLIAM ELLERY.

## CONNECTICUT.

ROGER SHERMAN,  
SAMUEL HUNTINGTON,  
WILLIAM WILLIAMS,  
OLIVER WOLCOTT.

## NEW YORK.

WILLIAM FLOYD,  
PHILIP LIVINGSTON,  
FRANCIS LEWIS,  
LEWIS MORRIS.

## NEW JERSEY.

RICHARD STOCKTON,  
JOHN WITHERSPOON,  
FRANCIS HOPKINSON,  
JOHN HART,  
ABRAHAM CLARK.

## PENNSYLVANIA.

ROBERT MORRIS,  
BENJAMIN RUSH,  
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,  
JOHN MORTON,  
GEORGE CLYMER,

JAMES SMITH,  
GEORGE TAYLOR,  
JAMES WILSON,  
GEORGE ROSS.

## DELAWARE.

CÆSAR RODNEY,  
GEORGE READ,  
THOMAS M'KEAN.

## MARYLAND.

SAMUEL CHASE,  
WILLIAM PACA,  
THOMAS STONE,  
CHARLES CARROLL, (of Carrollton.)

## VIRGINIA.

GEORGE WYTHE,  
RICHARD HENRY LEE,  
THOMAS JEFFERSON,  
BENJAMIN HARRISON,  
THOMAS NELSON, Jun.  
FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE,  
CARTER BRAXTON.

## NORTH CAROLINA.

WILLIAM HOOPER,  
JOSEPH HEWES,  
JOHN PENN.

## SOUTH CAROLINA.

EDWARD RUTLEDGE,  
THOMAS HEYWARD, Jun.  
THOMAS LYNCH, Jun.  
ARTHUR MIDDLETON.

## GEORGIA.

BUTTON GWINNETT,  
LYMAN HALL,  
GEORGE WALTON.

## BOOK SEVENTH.

1776. HAVING sketched the two first periods of this obstinate contest, in the first of which we have seen the British ministers provoking the Americans, by oppressive laws, to resistance and revolt; and in the second, conducting the war which ensued with feeble counsels and insufficient means; the order of history requires that we should now proceed to the recital of the events which signalised the third, wherein, at length displaying all their force, they proposed to suppress the rebellion entirely, and to reduce the colonists to subjection.

General Howe having arrived from Halifax, landed the twenty-fifth of June at Sandy Hook, a point of land situated at the entrance of the Gulf, comprehended between the main land of New Jersey, the mouth of the Rariton, Staten Island, and the opening of the bay of New York, on the one side, and Long Island on the other. On the second of July he took possession of Staten Island. The resolution of independence may, therefore, be praised for its boldness, or blamed for its temerity; which was taken, as is seen, at the very instant when England was preparing to attack, with formidable forces, the most vulnerable parts of America. The general would have preferred waiting at Halifax till the arrival of the reenforcements expected from Europe, with the fleet of his brother, the admiral, in order to repair, in concert with him, to the waters of New York, and to terminate the war by a sudden and decisive blow. But the English fleet delayed to appear, and the quarters of Halifax were as inconvenient, as provisions were scarce there; a part of the troops had been compelled to remain on board the ships. The season for operations also advancing, general Howe determined to go and wait for his reenforcements in the vicinity of New York; the squadron of convoy was commanded by admiral Shuldham.

He was joined in the passage by some regiments that, having been separated from the fleet by contrary winds, were steering alone for Halifax. Other corps fell into the power of the American cruisers. The inhabitants of Staten Island received the English general with great demonstrations of joy; the soldiers being quartered about in the villages, found, in abundance, the refreshments of which they were in the greatest need. Here general Howe was visited by governor Tryon, who gave him precise information with respect to the state of the province, as also with regard to the forces and preparations of the enemy. Many inhabitants of New Jersey came to offer themselves to be enrolled for the royal service; even those of Staten Island were forward to enlist under the English standard; every thing announced that the army had only to show itself in the

provinces to be assured of a prompt victory. Admiral Howe, after touching at Halifax, where he found despatches from his brother, who urged him to come and join him at New York, made sail again immediately, and landed, without accident, at Staten Island, the twelfth of July. General Clinton arrived there about the same time, with the troops he reconducted from the unfortunate expedition of Charleston. Commodore Hotham also appeared there with the reinforcements under his escort; so that in a short time the army amounted to about twenty-four thousand men, between English, Hessians, and Waldeckers. Several regiments of Hessian infantry were expected to arrive shortly, when the army would be carried to the number of thirty-five thousand combatants, of the best troops of Europe. America had never seen such a display of forces.

It began now to appear that the ministers had at length adopted vigorous measures, hoping to terminate the war at a blow, and to repair the evils produced by their long hesitation and delays.

General and admiral Howe, both officers of high distinction, were to combine their efforts against the province of New York; which, feeble by itself, broken by a great number of islands and large rivers, and offering a great extent of coasts, was more exposed than any other to the attacks of an enemy that was master at sea.

The English army was abundantly provided with arms and munitions, and the soldiers manifested an extreme ardor for the service of the king. The English, besides their particular hatred against the insurgents, were also stimulated by their national jealousy towards the Germans; they considered the confidence placed by the government in these strangers as indicating a want of it in them. They were eager to prove to the world that, without their assistance, they were capable of subduing America. The Germans, on their part, who justly thought themselves not inferior to the English, would by no means appear to yield to them, and this reciprocal emulation warranted the expectation of extreme efforts on the one part and on the other. When the submission of the province of New York should have given the English a firm footing in America, small garrisons, supported by a formidable maritime force, would be sufficient to defend it against the insults of the enemy, and the army might safely proceed to the conquest of the adjacent provinces.

New York, forming the centre of the American colonies, the English army would be able to turn at will, either upon the right, in order to carry the war into Connecticut and all New England, or upon the left to scour New Jersey and menace Philadelphia itself. It was besides very easy, by means of frigates and other smaller vessels, to maintain the communication between the two parts of the army upon the right and left banks of the Hudson, and even to pass it upon occasion, and promptly transport troops from one side to the other.



Finally, this position of New York, as well by its nature as by reason of the numerous marine of the English, was for them a place of arms, whence they could infest the neighboring places, attack their enemies at their own time, combat them with success, and retreat without danger.

They resolved, accordingly, to make it the centre of their operations ; the loyalists were also very numerous there, and in no city of America, was the party of the Congress more feeble.

There occurred, also, another consideration of the highest importance. If general Carleton, after having passed, as was hoped, the lakes of Canada, could penetrate to the banks of the Hudson, and descend this river at the same time that general Howe should ascend it, their conjunction would have the immediate effect of interrupting all communication between the provinces of New England, situated upon the left bank, and those of the middle and south, which are found upon the right ; and such had always been the favorite plan of the ministry.

Finally, it was considered that Long Island, separated from the island of New York only by the East river, and being abundant in grains and in cattle, offered the means of subsistence for the most numerous army. Its inhabitants, besides, were believed to be well inclined towards the royal cause.

While general Howe was seconded in his invasion of New York by the twelve or thirteen thousand men coming from Canada under governor Carleton, general Clinton was to operate in the provinces of the south, and to attack Charleston. The American troops being thus divided, and their generals surprised and pressed on so many sides at once, it was not doubted but that the British arms would soon obtain a complete triumph. But there happened in this occurrence what is often seen in the execution of human designs, when their success depends upon the concurrence of a great number of parts ; one proceeds towards the object, another recedes from it, and all equally miss it.

A prosperous event in this business appeared the less probable, since independently of the obstacles raised by men, it was necessary also to combat the winds and the seasons. Would it not have been calculating upon a scarcely possible contingency, to have expected the arrival of three distinct corps of the army at their places of destination at the hour prefixed, so as to operate in perfect concert ? Was it even certain that all the three would prove victorious ? This, however, was necessary to secure the execution of the plan of the campaign.

It happened, therefore, on the one part, that admiral Howe, having been retarded by contrary winds, did not land his reenforcements till after the expedition of Charleston had totally miscarried, as we have related. And on the other, the army of Canada encountered so many

obstacles to the passage of the lakes, that it was not able to make its way this year to the banks of the Hudson. Whence it resulted not only that Washington was not compelled to weaken the already feeble army which he had upon the coasts, in order to send succours into South Carolina, or towards Canada, but that the same soldiers who had so valiantly defended Charleston, went to reenforce those who guarded the passage of the lakes, or joined the principal army. But notwithstanding these failures, it was still confidently hoped that general Howe would be able alone to make a decisive campaign. This hope was not perhaps devoid of all foundation. It is plain, therefore, how many probabilities the British ministers and generals would have united in their favor, if instead of having scattered their forces upon several points, they had concentrated them in a single mass, leaving only sufficient garrisons in the places necessary to their operations.

The Americans, on their part, had neglected no preparative in order to resist the storm with which they were menaced. The Congress had ordained the construction of rafts, of gun boats, of galleys, and of floating batteries, for the defence of the port of New York and the mouths of the Hudson. But it could not be hoped that such feeble preparations were competent to oppose, with any chance of success, the formidable marine of England.

The Congress had also decreed that thirteen thousand of the provincial militia should go and join the army of Washington, who, being seasonably apprised of the danger of New York, had made a movement into that quarter; they also directed the organisation of a corps of ten thousand men, destined to serve as a reserve in the provinces of the centre. All the weakest posts had been carefully intrenched, and furnished with artillery. A strong detachment occupied Long Island, to prevent the English from landing there, or to repulse them if they should effect a debarkation. But the army of the Congress was very far from having all the necessary means to support the burthen of so terrible a war. It wanted arms, and it was wasted by diseases. The reiterated instances of the commander-in-chief had drawn into his camp the militia of the neighboring provinces, and some regular regiments from Maryland, from Pennsylvania, and from New England, which had carried his army to the number of twenty-seven thousand men; but a fourth part of these troops was composed of invalids, and scarcely was another fourth furnished with arms. The greatest part, without order, as without discipline, could inspire little confidence.

These inconveniences, so seriously alarming for the success of the American cause, proceeded partly from the want of money, which prevented the Congress from paying regular troops and providing for their equipment, and partly from an impolitic parsimony contracted during peace, which withheld them from incurring, with promptitude, the expenses rendered necessary by a state of war. Their rooted

jealousy of standing armies contributed also to the same effect ; it had even inspired them with the idle hope of being able to organise every year an army sufficient to resist the forces of the enemy.

Perhaps, finally, many of the colonists were reluctant to take arms, because they still flattered themselves that the commissioners of the king, being at the same time chiefs of the troops, and negotiators of peace, might succeed in effecting a general reconciliation.

The American army, such as it was, occupied the positions most suitable to cover the menaced points. The corps which had been stationed in Long Island was commanded by major-general Greene, who, on account of sickness, was afterwards succeeded by general Sullivan. The main body of the army encamped in the island of New York, which, it appeared, was destined to receive the first blows of the English.

Two feeble detachments guarded Governor's Island, and the point of Paulus' Hook, situated in front of New York, upon the right bank of the Hudson. The militia of the province, commanded by the American general Clinton, were posted upon the banks of the Sound, where they occupied the two Chesters, East and West, and New Rochelle. For it was to be feared that the enemy, landing in force upon the north shore of the Sound, might penetrate to Kingsbridge, and thus entirely lock up all the American troops in the island of New York.

All being prepared on the one side for attack, on the other for defence, and the two parties appearing equally decided to refer the destiny of America to the chance of battles, the English commissioners, before coming to this appeal, wished to make trial of the pacific powers with which they were invested. Already, in the month of June, lord Howe, being upon the coasts of Massachusetts in the *Eagle* ship of the line, had, in the name of the king, addressed a letter to all the governors who had been expelled from their provinces, enjoining them to use all possible means to spread it among the inhabitants.

He therein announced that the king had authorised two commissioners to grant general or particular pardons to all those who, during the troubles, had departed from the obedience due to the crown, but who now desired to return to their duty, and participate in the benefits of the royal clemency. He also declared that the commissioners were empowered to proclaim any province or city whatsoever to be in the king's peace, which immediately sheltered them from the effect of the penal laws against rebellion. Finally, he promised large recompense to such as, by their services, should contribute to reestablish the royal authority. These writings, commonly brought by flags, circulated in the country ; and general Washington sent by express to Congress a proclamation which had been addressed to the city of Amboy. That assembly took the noble resolution of causing



it to be printed in all the public papers, in order that the good people of the United States, such were the words of the resolution, might be informed of the powers of the commissioners, and of the means by which Great Britain hoped to lull them into security and to disarm them; and also that the most obstinate might be convinced that they could no longer expect the preservation of their privileges, but from their arms alone.

In the meantime, a letter was brought from lord Howe, directed simply to George Washington, Esq. The general refused to receive it, alleging, that whoever had written it had not expressed his public station, and that as a private individual he could not, and would not, hold any communication, whether written or verbal, with the commanders of the king. His conduct in this instance was much applauded by the Congress; and they decreed that in future none of their officers should receive letters or messages, on the part of the enemy, that were not addressed to them according to their respective rank.

The English commissioners were unwilling that a mere point of ceremonial should interrupt negotiations from which they expected some advantage. They could not, on the other hand, consent to acknowledge in the generalissimo of Congress a rank which had been conferred, as they believed, by an unlawful authority.

They had recourse, therefore, to an expedient by which they hoped to obviate all difficulty; they changed the address of their letter for the superscription following; to *George Washington, &c. &c.* Adjutant-general Patterson was sent with this despatch. Being introduced to Washington, he gave him in conversation the title of *Excellency*. The general received him with great politeness, but at the same time with much dignity. The adjutant expressed great concern, in the behalf of his principals, on account of the difficulties that had arisen about the superscription of the letter; assured him of their high regard for his personal character, and that they had no intention to undervalue his rank. It was hoped, therefore, that the *et ceteras*, being in use between ambassadors when they were not perfectly agreed upon points of etiquette, would remove all obstructions to their mutual intercourse.

Washington answered, that a letter written to a person invested with a public character should specify it, otherwise it could not be distinguished from a private letter; that it was true the *et ceteras* implied every thing; but it was no less true that they implied any thing; and that, as to himself, he would never consent to receive any letter, relating to public affairs, that should be directed to him, without a designation of his rank and office. Patterson requested that this question might be waved; and turned the conversation upon prisoners of war. He expatiated in magnificent terms upon the goodness and clemency of the king, who had chosen for negotiators

lord and general Howe. He affirmed that their desire to terminate the differences which had arisen between the two people was as earnest as their powers were ample ; and that he hoped the general would consider this visit as the first step towards it. Washington replied, that he was not authorised to negotiate ; but that it did not appear that the powers of the commissioners consisted in any more than in granting pardons ; that America, not having committed any offence, asked for no forgiveness, and was only defending her unquestionable rights. Patterson exclaimed that this subject would open too vast a field of discussion ; and repeating his regrets that a strict observation of formalities should interrupt the course of so important an affair, he took leave of the general, and withdrew. This conference thus remained without result, and all thoughts were again concentrated in war. The Congress were perfectly aware, on the one hand, of the shame they must incur by departing from the resolution so recently taken of asserting independence, and they feared on the other that the propositions of England might contain some secret poison. They caused an exact relation to be printed of the interview between the commander-in-chief and the English adjutant-general.

The British generals seeing that the obstinacy of the Americans left them no longer any hope of an accommodation, directed their entire attention to the prosecution of the war, and resolved to strike the first blows without longer delay. Wishing, in the first place, to secure a post which might serve in case of need as a place of retreat, and to furnish the means of subsistence for so powerful an army, they decided to attack Long Island, in which they depended for success upon the superiority of military talents which they believed themselves to have, and which they really had, over the Americans. Accordingly, having made all their dispositions, the twenty-second of August, the fleet approached the west coast of the island near the strait, called the *Narrows*, which separates it from Staten Island ; all the troops found an easy and secure landing place between the villages of Gravesend and New Utrecht, where they debarked without meeting any resistance on the part of the Americans.

A great part of their army, under the command of general Putnam, encamped at Brookland or Brooklyn, in a part of the island itself which forms a sort of peninsula. He had strongly fortified the entrance of it with moats and intrenchments ; his left wing rested upon the *Wallabout* bay, and his right was covered by a marsh contiguous to another bay, called *Gowan's Cove*. Behind him he had Governor's Island, and the arm of the sea which separates Long Island from the island of New York, and which gave him a direct communication with the city, where the other part of the army was stationed under Washington himself. The commander-in-chief perceiving that battle was approaching, continually exhorted his men

to keep their ranks, and summon all their courage ; he reminded them that in their valor rested the only hope that remained to American liberty ; that upon their resistance depended the preservation or the pillage of their property by barbarians ; that they were about to combat in defence of their parents, their wives, their children, from the outrages of a licentious soldiery ; that the eyes of America were fixed upon her champions, and expected from their success on this day either safety or total destruction.

The English having effected their landing, marched rapidly forward. The two armies were separated by a chain of hills, covered with woods, called the heights of Guan, and which, running from west to east, divide the island into two parts. They are only practicable upon three points ; one of which is near the Narrows, the road leading to that of the centre passes by a village named *Flatbush*, and the third is approached, far to the right, by the route of another village called *Flatland*. Upon the summit of the hills is found a road which follows the length of the range, and leads from *Bedford* to *Jamaica*, which is intersected by the two roads last described ; these ways are all interrupted by precipices, and by excessively difficult and narrow defiles.

The American general wishing to arrest the enemy upon these heights, had carefully furnished them with troops, so that if all had done their duty, the English would not have been able to force the passages without extreme difficulty and danger. The posts were so frequent upon the road from Bedford to Jamaica, that it was easy to transmit, from one of these points to the other, the most prompt intelligence of what passed upon the three routes.

Colonel Miles, with his battalion, was to guard the road of Flatland, and to scour it continually with his scouts, as well as that of Jamaica, in order to reconnoitre the movements of the enemy. Meanwhile, the British army pressed forward, its left wing being to the north, and its right to the south ; the village of Falmouth was found in its centre. The Hessians, commanded by general Heister, formed the main body ; the English, under major-general Grant, the left ; and other corps, conducted by general Clinton, and the two lords, Percy and Cornwallis, composed the right. In this wing the British generals had placed their principal hope of success ; they directed it upon Flatland. Their plan was, that while the corps of general Grant, and the Hessians of general Heister, should disquiet the enemy upon the two first defiles, the left wing, taking a circuit, should march through Flatland, and endeavor to seize the point of intersection of this road with that of Jamaica ; and then rapidly descending into the plain which extends at the foot of the heights, upon the other side, should fall upon the Americans in flank and rear. The English hoped, that as this post was the most distant from the centre of the army, the advanced guards would be found more feeble there,



and perhaps more negligent; finally, they calculated that, in all events, the Americans would not be able to defend it against a force so superior. This right wing of the English was, in effect, the most numerous, and entirely composed of select troops.

The evening of the twenty-sixth of August, general Clinton commanding the vanguard, which consisted in light infantry; lord Percy the centre, where were found the grenadiers, the artillery, and the cavalry; and Cornwallis the rear guard, followed by the baggage, some regiments of infantry and of heavy artillery; all this part of the English army put itself in motion with admirable order and silence, and leaving Flatland, traversed the country called New Lots. Colonel Miles, who this night performed his service with little exactness, did not perceive the approach of the enemy; so that two hours before day the English were already arrived within a half mile of the road of Jamaica, upon the heights. Then general Clinton halted, and prepared himself for the attack. He had met one of the enemy's patrols and made him prisoner.

General Sullivan, who commanded all the troops in advance of the camp of Brooklyn, had no advice of what passed in this quarter. He neglected to send out fresh scouts; perhaps he supposed the English would direct their principal efforts against his right wing, as being the nearest to them.

General Clinton learning from his prisoners that the road of Jamaica was not guarded, hastened to avail himself of the circumstance, and occupied it by a rapid movement. Without loss of time, he immediately bore to his left towards Bedford, and seized an important defile which the American generals had left unguarded. From this moment the success of the day was decided in favor of the English.

Lord Percy came up with his corps; and the entire column descended by the village of Bedford from the heights into the plain which lay between the hills and the camp of the Americans. During this time general Grant, in order to amuse the enemy and divert his attention from the events which took place upon the route of Flatland, endeavored to disquiet him upon his right; accordingly, as if he intended to force the defile which led to it, he had put himself in motion about midnight, and had attacked the militia of New York and of Pennsylvania who guarded it. They at first gave ground; but general Parsons being arrived, and having occupied an eminence, he renewed the combat, and maintained his position till brigadier-general lord Sterling came to his assistance with fifteen hundred men. The action became extremely animated, and fortune favored neither the one side nor the other. The Hessians, on their part, had attacked the centre at break of day; and the Americans, commanded by general Sullivan in person, valiantly sustained their efforts. At the same time the English ships, after having made several move-

ments, opened a very brisk cannonade against a battery established in the little island of Red Hook, upon the right flank of the Americans, who combated against general Grant.

This also was a diversion, the object of which was to prevent them from attending to what passed in the centre and on the left. The Americans defended themselves, however, with extreme gallantry, ignorant that so much valor was exerted in vain, since victory was already in the hands of the enemy. General Clinton being descended into the plain, fell upon the left flank of the centre, which was engaged with the Hessians. He had previously detached a strong corps in order to intercept the Americans.

As soon as the appearance of the English light infantry apprised them of their danger, they sounded the retreat, and retired in good order towards their camp, bringing off their artillery. But they soon fell in with the party of royal troops which had occupied the ground on their rear, and who now charged them with fury; they were compelled to throw themselves into the neighboring woods, where they met again with the Hessians, who repulsed them upon the English, and thus the Americans were driven several times by the one against the other with great loss.

They continued for some time in this desperate situation, till at length several regiments, animated by an heroic valor, opened their way through the midst of the enemy, and gained the camp of general Putnam; others escaped through the woods. The inequality of the ground, the great number of positions which it offered, and the disorder which prevailed throughout the line, were the cause that for several hours divers partial combats were maintained, in which many of the Americans fell.

Their left wing and centre being discomfited, the English, desirous of a complete victory, made a rapid movement against the rear of the right wing, which, in ignorance of the misfortune which had befallen the other corps, was engaged with general Grant. Finally, having received the intelligence, they retired. But encountering the English who cut off their retreat, a part of the soldiers took shelter in the woods, others endeavored to make their way through the marshes of Gowan's Cove; but here many were drowned in the waters, or perished in the mud; a very small number only escaped the hot pursuit of the victors, and reached the camp in safety. The total loss of the Americans, in this battle, was estimated at more than three thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. Among the last were found general Sullivan, and brigadier-generals lord Sterling and Woodhull. Almost the entire regiment of Maryland, consisting of young men of the best families in that province, was cut in pieces. Six pieces of cannon fell into the power of the victors. The loss of the English was very inconsiderable; in killed, wounded, and prisoners, it did not amount to four hundred men.

The Americans, in this day, assuredly committed a great fault, since they were forced to combat with a part of their forces against all those of the enemy. They omitted to use the requisite diligence to inform themselves of the quantity of troops disembarked; they neglected to cause the roads of the heights to be properly scoured by their scouts, and especially those upon their left, which was the menaced part; finally, they had not sufficiently guarded the difficult passes upon the road of Jamaica. There even arose some rumors which threw suspicions of treachery upon those who were charged with this guard; but it is certain that they were culpable rather of negligence than of evil intentions. Colonel Miles enjoyed a reputation that placed him above suspicion. It appears, indeed, that general Sullivan, either from too much confidence or too much mildness, did not employ all the rigorous means which so important a circumstance exacted, to prevent the secret intelligence of the loyalists with the English; these were, therefore, diligently informed of the weakest places, and of the negligence with which the service was performed. The English and the Hessians combated not only with courage, but even with an impetuous ardor, excited by their reciprocal emulation, and by the desire to efface the stains of former defeats.

In the height of the engagement, general Washington had crossed over to Brooklyn from New York, and seeing some of his best troops slaughtered or taken, he uttered, it is said, an exclamation of anguish. He could, if he saw fit, draw out of their encampment all the troops, and send them to succour the corps that were engaged with the enemy; he might also call over all the forces he had in New York, and order them to take part in the battle. But all these reenforcements would by no means have sufficed to render his army equal to that of the English. Victory having already declared in their favor, the courage with which it inspired them, and the superiority of their discipline, cut off all hope of being able to restore the battle. If Washington had engaged all his troops in the action, it is probable that the entire army would have been destroyed on this fatal day, and America reduced to subjection. Great praise, therefore, is due him for not having allowed himself, in so grave an occurrence, to be transported into an inconsiderate resolution, and for having preserved himself and his army for a happier future.

The English were so elated with victory, that eager to profit by their advantages they would fain have immediately assaulted the American camp. But their general manifested more prudence; whether he believed the intrenchments of the enemy stronger than they really were, or whether he considered himself already sure of entering New York without encountering new perils, he repressed the ardor of his troops. Afterwards, having encamped in front of the enemy's lines in the night of the twenty-eighth, he broke ground



within six hundred paces of a bastion upon the left. His intention was to approach by means of trenches, and to wait till the fleet could cooperate with the land troops.

The situation of the Americans in their camp became extremely critical. They had in front an enemy superior in number, and who could attack them at every moment with a new advantage. Their intrenchments were of little moment, and the English, pushing their works with ardor, had every probability of success in their favor.

For two days and two nights the rain had fallen by torrents ; the arms and ammunition suffered from it alike. The soldiers, overwhelmed with fatigue and discouraged by defeat, would have made but a feeble resistance. The English ships were in readiness to enter the East river. They had hitherto been prevented by a north-east wind, which for them was as contrary as it was propitious for the Americans. But it might change the next moment, and the English once masters of this river, retreat was intercepted to the soldiers of Congress, and the whole army would have incurred the danger of being forced to surrender to the superior force of the enemy. The council of war being assembled, the American generals resolved to evacuate their position, and to withdraw into New York. All the dispositions having been made, the retreat across the East river was undertaken. Colonel Glover commanded the vessels and flat boats of transport, general Macdougall was charged with the embarkation, and colonel Mifflin was to cover the rear guard. The twenty-ninth, at eight in the evening, the troops began to move with the greatest silence. But they were not on board before eleven. A violent northeast wind and the ebb tide, which rendered the current very rapid, prevented the passage ; the time pressed however. Fortunately, the wind suddenly veered to the northwest ; they immediately made sail, and landed in New York. Providence appeared to have watched over the Americans ; about two o'clock in the morning, a thick fog, and at this season of the year extraordinary, covered all Long Island, whereas the air was perfectly clear on the side of New York.

Notwithstanding the entreaties of his officers, Washington remained the last upon the shore ; he refused to embark till he saw his troops all on board. They amounted in all to nine thousand men.

The artillery, baggage, camp equipage, munitions, every thing was safely transported to the other side. It was not till the next morning, the sun being already high, and after the mist was dissipated, that the English discovered, to their great surprise, that the Americans had abandoned their camp, and were already sheltered from all pursuit. They perceived only a part of the rear guard, out of reach in their boats, who had returned to carry away some munitions which had been left in the island.

Whoever will attend to all the details of this retreat, will easily believe that no military operation was ever conducted by great captains with more ability and prudence, or under more favorable auspices.

It still remained to evacuate Governor's Island, situated at the mouth of the East river ; it was occupied by two regiments, with a numerous artillery and abundant munitions. The Americans had fortified it to interdict the entrance of this river to the English. But after the loss of Long Island, it could not be hoped to defend the passage, and the garrison was in danger of falling into the power of the enemy. The evacuation of Governor's Island was also effected without accident, notwithstanding the vicinity of the English ships. Thus all the American army, after the defeat of Long Island, found itself united in the island of New York.

The check of Brooklyn had made upon the Americans a profound impression of terror, and their position actually became very alarming.

Until then, they had flattered themselves that heaven would constantly favor their arms ; and it was, in truth, the first time that fortune had betrayed them so cruelly. But not having been accustomed to her rigors, from the excess of confidence which intoxicated them in prosperity, they fell all at once into that of dejection.

They had persuaded themselves that personal valor completely supplied the want of discipline ; and they had gone so far as even to hold in derision the European system of tactics. But since they had found, by fatal experience, of how much utility it was in regular battles, their eyes were opened, and they had lost all confidence in themselves. At first they had believed that courage, without discipline, could do all ; they now thought it could do nothing. At every moment they were apprehensive of some new surprise ; at every step of falling into an ambuscade. Thus, from discouragement, they became still more negligent of order. The militia, especially, according to the usage of multitudes armed in moments of emergency, became every day more disorderly and intractable. Not content with enjoying a liberty without bounds in the camp, they abandoned their colors by hundreds, and entire regiments deserted to return to their provinces. Their example became fatal to the regular troops themselves ; their subordination diminished, and desertion enfeebled them daily. Their engagement was but for one year, and even in some corps only for a few weeks ; the hope of soon returning to their families and friends so acted upon these soldiers that they avoided dangers. Ardor and enthusiasm had at first overruled these domestic affections ; but they now triumphed over a zeal extinguished by ill fortune.

The fidelity of the generals was not suspected, but their talents were distrusted, and every thing appeared to threaten a total dissolu-

tion. Confounded by the blows of fortune, and little used to support them, the Americans thus gave themselves up for lost. Washington contended earnestly with exhortations, with persuasions, and with promises, to arrest the progress of the disorganisation. Wherein, if he did not succeed according to his desires, he obtained, however, more than his hopes. The greater part, yielding to his authority, and the benevolence they bore him, consented to remain. He had not neglected to address the Congress an energetic picture of the deplorable situation of his army; he represented to them how important it was to accept no more engagements, but for the total duration of the war; and he assured them that he must despair of American liberty, unless he was furnished with an army that should stand by him till the conclusion of the enterprise. The remonstrances and instances of the commander-in-chief, were seconded by all the military chiefs of distinction that were found at that time in America, and the Congress at length yielded to their desires. They decreed that a regular army should be formed, in which the soldiers should be enlisted to serve during the present war; and that it should be composed of eighty-eight battalions, to be raised in all the provinces according to their respective abilities.\* To induce the inhabitants to enlist, the Congress decreed, besides, that a bounty of twenty dollars should be given to each man at the time of engagement, and portions of unoccupied lands were promised to the officers and soldiers.† But from the difficulty of finding men who would enlist for the whole term of the war, this resolution was afterwards modified, so as to admit of engagements either for three years or during the war; specifying, however, that such as enlisted only for three years had no right to grants of land. This measure was of great utility. Here also is seen the power of good or ill fortune over nations. If those who allow themselves to be over elated by prosperity, are without courage in adversity, those who use the favors of fortune with moderation, are able to support its reverses with fortitude.

General Howe, wishing to take advantage of the terror which victory inspires, and persuading himself that the Americans, disheartened by so many checks, would be more modest in their pretensions, despatched general Sullivan to the Congress with a message purporting, that though he could not consistently treat with that assembly in the character they had assumed, yet he would gladly confer with some of their members in their private capacity, and would meet them

\* The eighty-eight battalions decreed by Congress, were to be furnished in the following proportion. Three in New Hampshire, fifteen in Massachusetts, two in Rhode Island, eight in Connecticut, four in New York, four in New Jersey, twelve in Pennsylvania, one in Delaware, eight in Maryland, fifteen in Virginia, nine in North Carolina, six in South Carolina, and one in Georgia.

† The grant of lands was thus regulated. Five hundred acres to a colonel, four hundred to a major, three hundred to a captain, two hundred to a lieutenant, one hundred and fifty to an ensign, and one hundred to noncommissioned officers and soldiers.



at any place they would appoint. He informed them that he was empowered, with the admiral his brother, to terminate the contest between Great Britain and America upon conditions equally advantageous to both ; these conditions, he added, he had not been able to obtain till after two months delay, which had prevented him from arriving before the declaration of independence. He expressed an earnest desire that an arrangement might take place before the events of the war became so decisive as to render it no longer a matter of choice for one of the parties to treat. He assured them, that if they were inclined to enter into an agreement, much might be granted to them which they had not required. He concluded by saying, that should the conference produce the probability of an accommodation, the authority of Congress would be acknowledged in order to render the treaty valid and complete in every respect. The commissioners hoped thus, by insidious words, to dispose the Americans to resume the yoke of England without dread.

It would be difficult to decide whether these propositions announced, on the part of the English, more hope than despair of victory. Perhaps the commissioners, not being authorised to grant all the conditions they offered, merely threw them out to create parties, or to amuse the Americans and to divert them from their preparations of war. However this may be, the Congress deliberated maturely upon this overture. Their refusal to listen to the proffered terms might alienate the minds of many ; and their consenting to enter into negotiation was a tacit admission that the declaration of independence was not irrevocable, or that ill fortune began to shake their constancy. The Congress, to avoid either of these inconveniences, though persuaded of the insincerity of the commissioners, decided for a middle course. They made answer, through general Sullivan, that the Congress of the free and independent states of America could not, consistently with the trust reposed in them, send any of their members to confer with whomsoever, otherwise than in their public capacity. But that as they desired that peace might be concluded upon equitable conditions, they would depute a committee of their body to learn whether the commissioners were authorised to treat, and what proposals they had to offer. Washington was instructed, at the same time, to answer any overtures that might be made him, by saying that the United States having taken arms to defend their existence and their liberty, would willingly consent to peace, provided the terms of it were reasonable, and drawn up first in writing, in order to be laid before Congress.

Thus the Americans appeared to incline for independence, without insisting, however, upon this point as an indispensable condition of peace, in order to reserve a way open to reconciliation if the fate of arms should prove too adverse. The deputies, appointed by Congress to hear the propositions of the commissioners, were Benja-

min Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, all three zealous partisans of independence. The interview took place the eleventh of September, in Staten Island, opposite Amboy. Admiral Howe spoke the first, saying, that though he could not treat with them as a committee of Congress, yet as he was authorised to confer with any gentlemen of influence in the colonies, on the means of restoring peace, he felt a real gratification in the present occasion to discourse with them upon this important subject.

The deputies replied, that since they were come to hear him, he was at liberty to look upon them in what light he pleased ; that they could not, however, consider themselves in any other character than that in which the Congress had placed them. Howe then entered upon the subject of the meeting ; he demanded that the colonies should return to their allegiance and duty towards the British crown ; he assured them of the earnest desire of the king to make his government easy and acceptable to them in every respect ; that those acts of parliament which were so obnoxious to them would undergo a revisal, and the instructions to governors would be reconsidered ; that if any just causes of complaint were found in the acts or instructions, they might be removed.

After having recounted the tyrannical acts of parliament, of which all their supplications had failed to procure the repeal, the deputies added, in reply, that a return to the domination of Great Britain was not now to be expected. 'There was no doubt, they said, that the Americans were inclined to peace, and willing to enter into any treaty with Britain that might be advantageous to both countries. If there was the same good disposition on her part, it would be easier for the commissioners, though not empowered at present to treat with them as independent states, to obtain fresh powers from their government for that purpose, than it would be for the Congress to procure them from the colonies to consent to submission.'

Howe then put an end to the conference, by saying that he deeply regretted there was no longer any hope of an accommodation.

The three deputies made their report to Congress of the issue of this interview, observing that the powers of the English commissioners were insufficient, and that it was impossible to place any dependence upon their offers or their promises. The Congress approved their conduct. This attempt at negotiation, therefore, served only to demonstrate, on the one hand, that the Congress persevering in their resolution and undaunted by reverses, were determined not to receive conditions from their enemies ; and on the other, how greatly the English government was still deceived with respect to the spirit which prevailed in America, and as to the means proper to be employed for the reestablishment of the ancient order of things.

But it seems in this revolution to have been the destiny of things, that the remedies should always arrive after the evils were become

incurable ; and that the government refusing out of pride at the favorable moment, to acquiesce in useful concessions, should afterwards have to submit to the rejection of its useless propositions.

The English generals, convinced by experience, that they must renounce all hope of accommodation, now turned their attention exclusively to military operations. The royal army found itself separated from that of the Congress only by the East river, which communicating with *Harlem Creek* flows between Long Island and Morrisania on the one part, and the island of New York on the other. The intention of the English was to land in some part of this last, where the least resistance could be opposed to them. Their ships cruised along the coasts, threatening sometimes one place and sometimes another, in order to keep the enemy at all points in uncertainty, and afterwards to attack upon one only with more advantage. A part of the fleet having doubled Long Island appeared in the Sound, a gulf of great breadth which separates this island from the coast of Connecticut, and communicates with the East river, by means of a narrow channel, which a very dangerous navigation and frequent shipwrecks have caused to receive the name of *Hell Gate*.

The English had taken possession of the island of *Montesoro*, situated in this strait, where they had erected a battery to answer that which the Americans had planted upon the opposite side of the river at *Hovenshook*. Two frigates, passing between Governor's Island and the point of *Red Hook*, had ascended into the East river, without receiving any injury from the artillery of the enemy, and had anchored out of its reach near a little island. The main body of the English fleet was moored in the waters of Governor's Island, ready to attack the city of New York itself, or to enter either the East river, or the Hudson.

Meanwhile, the ships were continually engaged with the batteries on shore, and frequent actions ensued for the possession of the little islands which are found in the first of these rivers. The English had need of them for the execution of their projects, and the Americans saw the necessity of defending them. But whether the English artillery was better served, or that the soldiers of this nation had acquired more confidence from their victory, and especially owing to the assistance of their ships, they succeeded in carrying, one after another, such of these islands, as their convenience acquired, and thus secured for themselves the entrance of the East river.

Washington had furnished the two shores of the island of New York with a numerous artillery, and had thrown up intrenchments in different places. He had four thousand five hundred men in the city ; six thousand five hundred at Harlem, a village situated in front of the opening of the sound ; and twelve thousand at Kingsbridge, at



the extremity of the island. He had been particularly careful to fortify this passage, in order to secure a free communication with the continent, and to prevent the enemy from seizing it by surprise, and thus entirely locking up the American army within the island itself. But the commander-in-chief felt extreme apprehensions for the city, and began to despair of preserving it in the power of the confederation. The enemy being considerably reenforced in the northern parts of Long Island, and having the command of the sound, it was to be feared he might disembark in the centre of the island of New York, near the mouth of the sound, in which case the garrison of the city, and all the troops encamped in its environs, having their retreat intercepted, would have been compelled to surrender; or else that, traversing the sound and Morrisania, he would go and establish himself with the greater part of his army in the rear of Kingsbridge.

In this last hypothesis the Americans losing all communication with the continent, would be forced either to capitulate, or to fight a battle whose success appeared secure in advance to the English by the choice of ground and of time, and the discouragement which still prevailed among the troops of the Congress.

The fortune of the Americans would then be past all hope, as well in consequence of the terror with which they would be seized, as from the loss of arms, of munitions, and of baggage. Washington had, therefore, signified to Congress his apprehensions, praying them to inform him of their intentions relative to the city of New York, if he found himself constrained to evacuate it. The Congress humanely replied, that it should be left entire and safe. Having afterwards assembled a council of war, he invited them to deliberate upon the necessity of an immediate evacuation of the city, and it evidently appeared that he was himself in favor of this measure. Some were of the same opinion, for the reasons above mentioned, in which they were confirmed by another consideration; they calculated, that by retiring further into the country, the English would be deprived of the important advantage they derived from the cooperation of their fleets. Other members of the council manifested a contrary sentiment, because they considered that the defence of New York would cause the enemy to consume time, and that, in the meanwhile, the season for military operations would have elapsed. They also thought that the evacuation of New York would have too much the appearance of cowardice, and that it might have the most fatal influence upon the spirit of the soldiers and of the inhabitants; the opinion of these prevailed. But at length the English having reenforced themselves greatly at the entrance of the sound, and in the islands of *Montesoro* and of *Buchanan*, a second council of war decided that it was not only prudent but even necessary to abandon New York. Accordingly, no time was lost in removing, by way of the Hudson river, the sick, the baggage, and the munitions, which were landed far above,

upon the shore of New Jersey. Some days after, the garrison marched out of the city, leaving it entirely in the power of the enemy.

While this evacuation was effected with great order on the part of the troops, but with much terror on the part of the inhabitants, a report was suddenly spread that the enemy had landed in the island. The soldiers hastened to make their junction with those stationed at Harlem.

While some of the English ships had entered the Hudson river, in order to draw the attention of the American generals on that side, and to interrupt the transportation of baggage and munitions, the first division of the British army, commanded by general Clinton, had embarked at the head of the bay at Newtown, and proceeding by the sound, entered the East river through Hell Gate; thence descending with the current, it had gone to disembark at Kipps Bay, three miles north of New York. This point was the weakest of all; and the English troops, protected by the fire of the ships, effected a landing there almost without resistance. When Washington was apprised of the debarkation, he detached the brigades of generals Parsons and Fellows to reenforce the corps that defended Kipps Bay. But they had already turned their backs; the others imitated them and shamefully fled, in defiance of the efforts of their officers to retain them. Washington arrived himself, and rallied them; but at sight of the English troops these militia disbanded anew. If the English had immediately pressed forward they would, without any doubt, have intercepted the retreat of the garrison of New York. But whether their generals could not credit so much pusillanimity on the part of the Americans, and were unwilling to risk themselves between two fires; or whether, as some writers assert, being elated with their success, they halted for the space of full two hours to divert themselves in the house of a gentlewoman of the country, it is certain that they gave time to general Putnam, who commanded the garrison, to defile and to rejoin the rest of the army. The Americans, however, left in the power of the enemy their heavy artillery, a great proportion of their baggage and munitions, and particularly their tents, of which they had the greatest need. They lost but few soldiers, and those in a skirmish near Bloomingdale.

The British army having despatched a strong detachment to take possession of the city of New York, which affords accommodation for a considerable garrison, went to encamp in the centre of the island, its right wing being posted at Horen's Hook, upon the East river, and its left at Bloomingdale, upon the Hudson. It thus occupied the entire breadth of the island, from one shore to the other, which in this place is more than a mile. The Americans were strongly intrenched in the northern part of the island, and especially at Kingsbridge; they had, besides, a position upon the heights of Harlem, distant only a mile and a half from the English outposts. They

occupied another difficult passage between Harlem and Kingsbridge, as well as the fort they had named Washington, upon the left bank of the Hudson.

There resulted, from the respective situation of the armies, frequent rencounters, in which the Americans gradually resumed courage, and accustomed themselves anew to look the enemy in the face. Washington ardently desired that his troops should often have these affairs with the English. Among others, there ensued one very hot action in the plain of Harlem, where some corps of English and Hessians, led on too far by their ardor, fell into an ambuscade which the Americans had laid for them, and were handled very roughly. Washington in his official letters, highly commended the valor displayed by his troops on this occasion.

A few days after the important position of New York was come into the power of the royal troops, there broke out in it a conflagration, which some attributed to the malice of certain individuals among the inhabitants themselves, to deprive the English of the resources offered them by this great city; others merely to chance. It was published at the time, that the fire had been kindled in various places at once, by means of combustibles disposed with great dexterity; but the Americans positively denied it. Such was the rapidity of the flames, the wind being violent and the weather very dry, that notwithstanding the speed and activity with which the garrison exerted themselves, a fourth part of the city was consumed. In the fury which transported them, they seized several of those whom they considered as the authors of this disaster, and precipitated them into the midst of the fire.

The English general, perceiving that the strength of the enemy's intrenchments was such as to render the attempt to dislodge him by an attack, both extremely hazardous and of doubtful success, took the resolution which, perhaps, he should have taken at first, that is, to go and encamp behind the position which the Americans occupied at Kingsbridge, and thus compel him to combat with disadvantage, to retire with loss, or to remain with peril. Accordingly, having left lord Percy with two English brigades, and one of Hessians in the encampment of Harlem, for the protection of New York, he embarked with the rest of the army in flat bottomed boats; and having safely entered the sound through Hell Gate, proceeded to disembark at Frogs Neck, in the vicinity of West Chester, upon the confines of New York and Connecticut.

This movement of general Howe has been the object of some criticisms; it was pretended that the Americans might have overwhelmed, by a sudden attack, the corps left at Harlem, and thus recovered possession of New York. But, perhaps, he founded the success of his operation upon the discouragement of the colonial troops, and upon the presence of the fleet, which in any event could afford a



shelter to the corps of Harlem, if they should find themselves too hard pressed. General Howe had also strongly fortified Gowans Hill, in order to cover the city. Then, with a view to prevent the enemy from receiving provisions from New Jersey by means of the Hudson river, he had ordered three frigates to pass up the river above forts Washington and Lee; the first situated upon the left bank, and the second upon the right. This order was executed with extreme ability, notwithstanding the artillery of the two forts, and the obstructions with which the Americans had endeavored to impede the navigation.

The English general remained several days at Frogs Neck, as well to repair the bridges which the enemy had broken, as to wait for a considerable reenforcement which he had called from Staten Island. The road from Frogs Neck to Kingsbridge is excessively rough with continual masses of small stones, and the Americans had also obstructed it in many places. Washington, who had assembled all his army at Kingsbridge, sent forward his light infantry to scour the country, and to harass the enemy in his march.

General Howe, having received his reenforcements, put himself in motion with all his troops; he crossed Pelham Manor, and went to encamp at New Rochelle, where he was joined by the second division of Hessians, and of the troops of Waldeck under general Knyphausen, and by a regiment of cavalry lately arrived at New York from Ireland. As the principal project of the expedition was to intercept the communication of Washington with the eastern provinces, and then, if he declined to venture an engagement, to shut him up in the island of New York, consequently it was necessary to occupy the two roads leading into Connecticut; the one upon the coast of the sound, and the other more inland. The first was already in the power of the English; but in attempting to occupy the second, it was requisite to traverse the difficult country of which we have already made mention, in order to secure the post of the highlands, known by the name of White Plains, upon the rear of Kingsbridge. General Howe determined to take this route; he marched, however, slowly and with extreme caution, after leaving at New Rochelle the German corps, lately arrived, to secure the lower road, and the communication with those places whence stores and necessaries were to arrive.

Washington examined, with attention, the danger of his position. He penetrated the designs of the enemy, and consequently decided to abandon, with the main body of his army, the encampment of Kingsbridge. Extending, therefore, his left wing, he took post with it in the White Plains, while the right occupied the heights of Valentine's Hill, near Kingsbridge; the centre exactly filled the space comprehended between these two points. Here he intrenched himself with the greatest care. His army thus formed a well secured

line, parallel to the river Brunx, which lay on its front, and separated it from the English, who marched up along the left bank of this stream.

Washington had behind him the great river Hudson, into which the English frigates had not yet been able to penetrate so far as to intercept the supplies of provisions which he received from the upper parts. With his left wing he occupied the upper road of Connecticut, by which he was also abundantly supplied with provisions and munitions. He had left sufficient garrisons at Kingsbridge, at Harlem, and in fort Washington; in this last place, however, against his own opinion. Meanwhile, he detached numerous parties, over the Brunx, in order to retard the motions of the enemy. Hence frequent skirmishes ensued, and though the royalists had generally the advantage in these rencounters, they still served to dissipate the terror of the Americans, who every day showed themselves more bold in defying the enemy.

Upon the approach of the English to the White Plains, Washington, all at once, called in his detachments, and abandoning the positions he had occupied along the Brunx, assembled all his troops in a strong camp upon the heights, near these plains, in front of the enemy. His right flank was protected by the Brunx, which, by its windings, also covered the front of the right wing. The main body was nearly parallel to the river, and the left wing being placed at a right angle upon the centre, and consequently parallel to the right, extended towards the north upon the hills, as much as was necessary to guard the defiles leading to the upper mountainous regions, into which the army, if expedient, might retire. But the right wing, being posted in more level and less difficult ground, found itself more exposed; wherefore general Macdougall was ordered to occupy, with a strong detachment, a mountain about a mile distant from the camp; he intrenched himself there as well as the time would admit of.

Such was the position of the American army when the English arrived within seven or eight miles of White Plains, and prepared themselves to attack without loss of time. On the morning of the twenty-eighth of October, they advanced in two columns, the right commanded by general Clinton, and the left by general Heister. At noon, all the outposts being driven back by the English and Hessian light infantry, the British army appeared before the American camp. Immediately there ensued a cannonade, but to very little effect. The English drew up in order of battle; their right occupied the road which leads to Merrineck, about a mile distant from the centre of the enemy; while the left, equally distant from his right, bordered the Brunx. The English general having observed the importance of the position taken by general Macdougall, and being persuaded that the right of the enemy, which was his only

assailable point, could not be forced so long as it should be protected by a post of such strength, resolved to wrest it from the Americans. He ordered a Hessian regiment, commanded by colonel Ralle, to ford the Brunx, and by a circuitous movement to fall upon the flank of general Macdougall, while general Leslie should attack him in front with a brigade of English and Hessians. Colonel Ralle having arrived at the point indicated, Leslie, who had also crossed the Brunx, furiously assaulted the intrenchments of Macdougall. The militia soon fled, but the regular troops made a valiant resistance. A regiment of Maryland, conducted by colonel Smallwood, and a regiment of New York, under colonel Ratzemar, ventured even to come out of the lines and to charge the enemy at the very foot of the mountain, but they were overpowered by number and forced to retire. Then the English and Hessians ascended the heights with singular intrepidity, and took possession of them after a vigorous struggle. The Americans, however, continued for some time to fire from behind the walls of enclosures, and thus retarded the progress of the assailants. But general Putnam, who had been sent to their succour, could not arrive in season. The loss of men in this action was great on the one part as well as on the other.

Washington, calmly expecting that the enemy would come to attack him next, had already sent into his rear the sick and the baggage ; but as it grew towards the close of day, the English general determined to defer the assault till the next morning. He caused his troops to encamp within cannon shot of the American lines. Washington took advantage of the night to strengthen them with additional works, and to occupy a stronger position in the rear with his left wing, which, by the loss of the mountain, had become more exposed. When the light appeared, general Howe reconnoitred the intrenchments of the enemy, and found them sufficiently formidable to determine him to wait the arrival of some battalions that had been left at New York, under the command of lord Percy, and of several companies from Merrineck. These reenforcements being received on the evening of the thirtieth, he appointed the following morning for the assault, but the excessive rain which fell during the night and also in the morning, compelled him to defer it. The American general, in the meantime, examined his position with his accustomed prudence ; he was decided not to risk a pitched battle without the strongest hope of success. He perceived that the English had already erected four or five batteries, and that by turning his right flank they might get possession of the heights situated upon his rear. He concluded, therefore, to break up his camp in the night of the first of November. He removed it into a country still more mountainous in the vicinity of North Castle ; having previously set fire to the houses in White Plains and the neighborhood, and to the forage that was found in the camp. He immediately



detached a strong corps to occupy the bridge over the Croton river, which leads to the upper parts of the Hudson. On the following morning the English took possession of the American camp.

General Howe, perceiving that his enemy declined an engagement, and that from the situation of the country, and his knowledge of every advantageous position, it would be impossible to compel him to fight but upon the most unequal and hazardous terms, took the determination to discontinue the pursuit, and to turn his attention to the reduction of the forts and fastnesses still occupied by the Americans in the neighborhood of New York. His views were particularly directed upon fort Washington, which was its principal bulwark. But, though the ground where this fortress had been erected was very rough and difficult, its fortifications were not sufficiently strong to resist heavy artillery. It was incapable, from its little extent, of containing more than a thousand defenders; the outworks that surrounded it, especially to the south, towards New York, might lodge, it is true, a much stronger garrison.

The commander-in-chief, as if he had foreseen the event, had written to general Greene, who commanded in this part, enjoining him to reflect maturely upon his position, and in case he should find that fort Washington was not in a situation to sustain an assault, to cause it to be forthwith evacuated; and to transport the garrison to the right bank of the Hudson. But this general, either believing that the strength of the place and the valor of the troops would assure him a long defence, or from the apprehension that his retreat would increase the already too general discouragement of the Americans, took the resolution to hold out to the last. He was herein the more easily determined, as he believed that the garrison would always be able to retreat into fort Lee, situated upon the other bank of the river. But Washington judged less favorably of the future; he was persuaded that the English would not remain satisfied with the reduction of the first fort; but that crossing the river, and making themselves masters of the second, which was not tenable, they would spread themselves in the province of New Jersey. He left therefore general Lee, with the militia of the eastern provinces, upon the left bank of the Hudson, and having secured the strong positions towards the Croton river, and especially that of Peek's Kill, near the Hudson itself, he crossed that river with the main body of his army, and went to rejoin general Greene in his camp under fort Lee. General Lee himself had orders to come with all speed and join him, in case the enemy, after having taken the forts, should show himself upon the right bank of the Hudson. He afterwards wrote to the governor of New Jersey, requesting him to remove the magazines of provisions into the most remote parts, and to call out all the militia. All these dispositions being made to his wish, Washington watched with an attentive eye the movements of the enemy.

Meanwhile, general Howe had ordered general Knyphausen to march from New Rochelle, and to occupy Kingsbridge. This he executed without obstacles, the Americans, who guarded this position, having fallen back upon fort Washington. The corps of general Knyphausen consequently penetrated into the island of New York, and proceeded to invest the fort, on the part of the north.

A short time after, the English general himself abandoned the White Plains, and descending along the banks of the Hudson, conducted the rest of the army to Kingsbridge. He pitched his camp upon the heights of Fordham, his right wing being covered by the Hudson, and his left by the Bronx.

The royalists then prepared to attack fort Washington ; its interior and appertinances were defended by full three thousand men, under the command of colonel Magaw, a brave and experienced officer. He was summoned in vain to surrender. The besiegers proceeded to the assault in four divisions, the first from the north, commanded by general Knyphausen, and consisting of Hessians and the troops of Waldeck ; the second from the east, composed of English light infantry and two battalions of guards, conducted by general Matthews. This corps was to attack the intrenchments which extended from fort Washington almost to the East river ; the third, commanded by colonel Sterling, was destined to pass this river lower down than the second, in order to assail the fort more to the south ; but this was only a feint. The fourth, which obeyed the orders of lord Percy, a very strong corps, was directed to aim its assault against the western flank of the fortress. These different divisions were provided with a numerous and excellent artillery. The Hessians, under general Knyphausen, were to pass through a very thick forest, where colonel Rawlings was already posted with his regiment of riflemen. An extremely warm affair was engaged, in which the Germans sustained a severe loss. The Americans ambushed behind the trees and rocks, fired in security ; but at last, the Hessians redoubling their efforts, gained a very steep ascent, whence they came down upon the enemy with an irresistible impetuosity ; the divisions which followed them were thus enabled to land without molestation. Colonel Rawlings retreated under the cannon of the fort. Lord Percy, on his part, had carried an advanced work, which facilitated the debarkation of the party under colonel Sterling, who, the moment he had landed, forced his way up a difficult height, which was very resolutely defended ; he gained the summit, where he took a considerable number of prisoners, notwithstanding their gallant resistance. Colonel Cadwallader, who was charged with the defence of this part, retired also into the fort.

Colonel Ralle, who led the right column of general Knyphausen's attack, surmounted all obstacles with admirable valor, and lodged his column within one hundred yards of the fort. Soon after general

Knyphausen joined him with the left column ; having at length extricated himself from the difficulties encountered in the forest. The garrison having thus lost, though not without glory, all their advanced works, found themselves closely invested within the body of the fortress. The besiegers then summoned colonel Magaw to surrender. He had already consumed nearly all his ammunition. The very multitude of defenders pressed into so narrow a space, was prejudicial to defence, and every thing demonstrated that he could not sustain an assault. Accordingly he decided to capitulate. The garrison, amounting to two thousand six hundred men, inclusive of the country militia, surrendered prisoners of war. The Americans had few killed ; the royalists lost about eight hundred, the greater part Germans.

The reduction of fort Washington thus gave the royal army entire possession of the island of New York.

Wishing to avail himself to the utmost of the defeat of the Americans, and to prevent them from rallying at another point, general Howe confided to lord Cornwallis the command of a corps of about six thousand men, directing him to pass the Hudson at Dobb's Ferry, and forthwith to invest fort Lee, in order, if possible, to surprise the garrison, which consisted in two thousand men. They had scarcely time to save themselves by abandoning the place, the moment they heard of the surrender of fort Washington, of the passage of the enemy, and of his force. Their artillery and military stores, their baggage, and particularly their tents, a loss the most sensible, fell into the power of the victors. The vanquished retired to the other side of the Hackensack. The British could now penetrate into the very heart of New Jersey.

These successive checks, the loss of the two forts, Washington and Lee, and especially the excessive vigor of the attack, which had constrained the first to surrender, produced a deplorable change in the fortune of the Americans. They beheld all at once what the fatal battle of Brooklyn had not been able to operate ; the dissolution of their army.

The militia disbanded and precipitately retired to their habitations ; even the regular troops, as if struck with despair, also filed off, and deserted in parties.

Every thing at this period of the war, threatened America with an inevitable catastrophe.

The army of Washington was so enfeebled that it scarcely amounted to three thousand men, who had lost all courage and all energy, and were exposed in an open country, without instruments to intrench themselves, without tents to shelter them from the inclemency of the season, and in the midst of a population little zealous, or rather hostile towards the republic.



The general of Congress had to face a victorious army, more than twenty thousand strong, composed entirely of disciplined and veteran troops. The excellent generals who commanded it, using the ardor inspired by victory, pursued their advantages with vivacity, and flattered themselves that a few days would suffice to crush the wrecks of the republican army, and put an end to the war. To all the difficulties against which Washington had to contend, should be added, that the English cavalry, though without being very numerous, scoured all the flat country, whereas he had nothing to oppose to it except a few diminutive and feeble hackneys from Connecticut, commanded by major Shelden. So total a deficiency of cavalry, in the immense plains of this country, appeared to extinguish for the Americans their little chance of success. They were no better provided with artillery than with horses. The greater part of their feeble army consisted in militia, almost all from New Jersey. These were either of suspicious fidelity, or desirous of returning to their habitations, to rescue their property and families from the perils that menaced them. The few regular soldiers who still remained with their colors, completed their term of service with the expiration of the year; it was therefore to be feared that this phantom of an army would vanish entirely in the space of a few days.

In so profound a distress, the American general could not hope to receive prompt or sufficient reinforcements. Consternation reigned in all the contiguous provinces; so that each, trembling for himself, refused to succour others. There still remained a few regiments of regular troops upon the frontiers of Canada; but they were necessary there to arrest the progress of the enemy; and, besides, the term of engagement was about to dissolve them shortly. Upon the heel of so many disasters was the imminent danger of seditions on the part of the disaffected, who in various places loudly invoked the name of England. An insurrection appeared ready to explode in the county of Monmouth, in this very province of New Jersey, so that Washington found himself constrained to detach a part of his army, already a mere skeleton, to overawe the agitators. The presence of a victorious royal army had dissipated the terror with which the patriots at first had inspired the loyalists. They began to abandon themselves without reserve to all the fury which animated them against their adversaries. The English commissioners determined to avail themselves of this disposition of the inhabitants to revolt against the authority of Congress. Accordingly the two brothers Howe drew up a proclamation, which they circulated profusely throughout the country. They commanded all those who had arms in hand to disperse and return to their habitations; and all those who exercised civil magistracies to cease their functions and divest themselves of their usurped authority. But, at the same time, they offered a full pardon to all such as within the space of sixty days

should present themselves before the civil or military officers of the crown, declaring their intention to take the benefit of the amnesty, and promising a sincere return to the obedience due to the laws and to the royal authority. This proclamation had the effect which the commissioners had promised themselves from it. A multitude of persons of every rank, availing themselves of the clemency of the victor, came daily to implore his forgiveness, and to protest their submission.

It was remarked, however, that they belonged for the greater part to the class of the very poor, or of the very rich. The inhabitants of a middle condition manifested more constancy in their opinions. Several of the newly reconciled had occupied the first stations in the popular order of things; they had been members either of the provincial government, or of the council of general safety, or of the tribunals of justice. They excused themselves by saying that they had only acted, in what they had hitherto done, with a view to promote the public welfare, and to prevent greater disorders; they alleged, finally, that they had been drawn in by their parents and friends, whom they were unable to refuse. Those who had contemplated them in all their arrogance, and who saw them then so meek, so submissive, and so humble in their words, could scarcely persuade themselves that they were indeed the same individuals. But men of this stamp dread much less to be considered inconstant and perfidious, than rebels to the laws of the strongest; they much prefer to escape danger with infamy, than to encounter it with honor. Nor was it only in New Jersey, and in the midst of the victorious royal troops, that these abrupt changes of party were observed; the inhabitants of Pennsylvania flocked in like manner to humble themselves at the feet of the English commissioners, and to promise them fealty and obedience. Among others there came the Galloways, the family of the Allens, and some others of the most wealthy and reputable. The example became pernicious, and the most prejudicial effects were to be apprehended from it. Every day ushered in some new calamity; the cause of America seemed hastening to irretrievable ruin. The most discreet no longer dissembled that the term of the war was at hand; and that the hour was come in which the colonies were about to resume the yoke. But Washington, in the midst of so much adversity, did not despair of the public safety. His constancy was an object of admiration. Far from betraying any symptoms of hesitation or of fear, he showed himself to his dejected soldiers with a serene countenance, and radiant, as it were, with a certain hope of a better future. Adverse fortune had not been able to vanquish, nay, not even to shake this invincible spirit. Firmly resolved to pursue their object through every fortune, the Congress manifested a similar constancy. It appeared as if the spirit of these great minds increased with adversity.

America is assuredly indebted to the magnanimity of her chiefs for the victory and independence which have crowned her efforts.

Thus pressed by time and circumstances, Washington took all the measures suggested by prudence in order to reenforce his army, not with the hope of being able to arrest the enemy in his triumphant march, but at least that he might not appear to have entirely abandoned the republic; and finally, to keep his standard waving till Divine Providence, or the benignity of fortune, should offer him an occasion to retrieve the affairs of his country.

He had some time before, as we have already related, directed general Lee to occupy, with a part of the army, the country watered by the Upper Hudson, in order to be at hand to succour the corps of Canada which opposed general Carleton upon the lakes. But on seeing New Jersey unguarded, and the danger which instantly menaced the city of Philadelphia itself, he ordered him to come, by forced marches, to rejoin him. This order was the more easy to be executed, as it was soon known that general Carleton, after having occupied Crown Point and made himself master of Lake Champlain, as will be seen in the course of this history, had retired without having ventured to attack Ticonderoga. The commander-in-chief, therefore, instructed general Schuyler to send him, without delay, the troops of Pennsylvania and of New Jersey, that were upon the frontiers of Canada. General Mercer, who commanded a corps of light infantry at Berghen, likewise received orders to rejoin the principal army with all speed. Little calculation, however, could be made upon these reenforcements in the present state of things; the march was long, the road difficult, the engagement of the soldiers almost expired, and the victorious enemy menaced upon all points at once. The American general neglected not to resort to the succours of the militia. He had represented to the principal authorities of Pennsylvania the critical situation of Philadelphia, which could not be saved unless his army was promptly reenforced; he therefore earnestly pressed them to send him the militia of the province. Washington finding his letters nearly without effect, despatched general Mifflin, who enjoyed great popular favor in this province, to paint, with vivid coloring, the urgency of the danger, and the necessity of a general effort to avert it. He wrote also to the governor of New Jersey, apprising him that unless he assembled the militia and caused them to join the army immediately, he must expect to see the enemy overrun the entire province as a conqueror, pass the Delaware and seize Philadelphia.

All his efforts were equally ineffectual in this part. The lower districts of the province, either wanting zeal or chilled with terror, made no movement; and it was not without a sort of repugnance that the inhabitants of the upper countries took arms for the defence of country.



Reduced to the uncertain hope of these feeble reenforcements, the Americans saw their enemies redoubling activity to render their triumph more complete. The army of Congress, after its retreat, had the Hackensack upon its front; but this narrow stream could not be considered as a sufficient defence against the keen pursuit of the English. Besides, as the Passaick flowed at no great distance in the rear of Washington, and the light troops of the enemy inundated the country, he ran the risk of being locked in between these two rivers. He therefore crossed the Passaick over the bridge of Aquakannunk, and took up his quarters at Newark, upon the right bank. The English immediately also passed the Hackensack, and overran the country up to the Passaick. Washington seeing lord Cornwallis approach with rapidity, abandoned the borders of this river, and retiring behind the Rariton took post at New Brunswick. Here the troops of Maryland and of New Jersey declared their term of engagement was expired, and deserting the rest of the army, retired to their respective homes. Some corps of the Pennsylvania militia followed this example; and the army, already so feeble, found itself upon the point of ceasing to exist. The English showed themselves every where, and always equally animated.

Washington, with the few regiments he had left, ventured to make some demonstrations as if he intended to resume the offensive; but this manœuvre was, in fact, designed to cover his retreat to Trenton, upon the left bank of the Delaware. Lord Sterling was left at Princeton, with twelve hundred men, to observe the motions of the enemy. Having little hope of being able to maintain even this position long, he sent across the river the sick, the baggage, and the munitions, and caused all the boats to be withdrawn to the opposite bank, that the English might not use them to effect their passage. He determined, however, to remain upon the frontiers of New Jersey, in order to be always at hand to retard the progress of the enemy. At length having received a reenforcement of two thousand men, composed of the armed citizens of Philadelphia, and of the German battalion already mentioned, he pressed forward with the intention of returning to Princeton. But upon the rumor, continually increasing, that lord Cornwallis was on his march from New Brunswick with a formidable force, divided in several columns so as to endanger his communications with the river, he retreated anew, and the eighth of December, leaving the frontiers of New Jersey entirely in the power of the enemy, he withdrew upon the right bank of the Delaware, having first, however, cut the bridges, broken the roads, and removed all the ferry boats. Scarcely had the rear guard gained the right bank, when the English light troops began to appear upon the left; but finding no means to cross the river, they could pursue no further.

The river Delaware was now the last defence that remained to the American troops ; if the English could pass it, they infallibly became masters of Philadelphia. And the acquisition of a city of such importance, which was at once the capital of the confederation, the seat of government, as well as of the principal authorities, and the central repository of military stores and provisions, must have produced such an effect upon the minds of the people, as perhaps would have given the English a complete triumph, or at least would have authorised them to expect a prompt termination of the war in their favor.

But lord Cornwallis, following the orders of general Howe, who did not proceed in this operation with the requisite ardor, had remained too long at New Brunswick ; he thus left Washington at liberty to interpose every obstacle to the passage of the river. It is impossible here not to blame the negligence of the English generals, who had not seasonably collected all the materials for laying bridges, and who even never thought of constructing rafts in order to gain the other bank. They might have done it in these first moments. Perhaps, no longer doubting of the certain success of their arms, they imagined they could pass the river whenever they pleased, and that Philadelphia would immediately open its gates to them. A memorable example, which proves that in war, more than in any other circumstance of life, it should never be thought that all is done, while there still remains something to do ! It is perfectly certain that this unexpected delay of the English operated to their prejudice through the whole course of the war, and that it was to this capital fault the Americans owed their safety.

The English general established his head-quarters at Trenton, extending his two wings, above and below, along the left bank of the Delaware. This river, after having run from northwest to southeast till it reaches Bordentown, there makes a sudden bend, and flows to the southwest towards Philadelphia ; if the English, therefore, had passed it above Trenton, at a place called *Coriell's Ferry*, or in its vicinity, they would have found themselves as near to this capital as the Americans themselves, who guarded the banks of the Delaware opposite Trenton. That they had formed this design is demonstrated by the attempt they made to seize certain boats at *Coriell's Ferry*, which, however, was defeated by the vigilance of lord Sterling. To oppose an obstacle to this passage, the commander-in-chief directed general Putnam, an engineer of great ability, to draw lines from the Schuylkill to the heights of Springatsburgh. But as the enemy had repaired the bridges below Trenton, and the corps he had at Bordentown were daily reenforced, the Americans became apprehensive that he would attempt to pass the river at once above them at *Coriell's Ferry* and below them at Burlington ; which would have enabled him to close upon their rear, and thus to shut up their

whole army in the point of land formed by the flexure of the Delaware. To obviate this danger, Washington stationed his galleys in places the most proper to observe the motions of the English, and to repulse them if they attempted the passage. The upper parts being the most menaced, he detached his best troops to guard them. Redoubts were erected from distance to distance, and furnished with artillery. Finally, the order was given, in case of misfortune, and if the enemy passed the river, that all the troops should fall back upon Germantown, a large village, but a few miles distant from Philadelphia.

The English generals seeing the enemy's preparations of defence, and perhaps hoping to be able to pass the Delaware in safety, when it should be frozen, which, as the season was now advanced, might be expected very shortly; instead of following the Americans in their retreat, and of allowing them no time to rally, distributed their troops in winter quarters. Four thousand men took their lodgings upon the very bank of the river, at Trenton, at Bordenton, at Black-horse and at Burlington. Strong detachments occupied Princeton and New Brunswick, where were found their magazines of provisions and of munitions. The rest of the troops were cantoned about in the villages of New Jersey.

While the English army was thus arrested upon the banks of the Delaware, either by the negligence or presumption of its chiefs, or by the firmness and prudence of Washington, this general omitted no exertions to reenforce his army with militia, as well as with regular troops.

Generals Mifflin and Armstrong, who both enjoyed a great influence in Pennsylvania, went through the province, exhorting the people to take arms and fly to the defence of the capital, and of the country. Their exhortations and the approach of danger produced the desired effect. Many of the inhabitants repaired to the republican standard, though without manifesting all of them a very ardent zeal. That the regular troops might serve as a nucleus, for the militia to rally about, Washington ordered general Gates to bring him promptly the best of the troops he commanded in Canada, after having posted the militia of New England to guard the most important passes. Gates arrived the twentieth of December at the army of Pennsylvania. General Lee had received the same order; but he executed it with great slowness and a sort of repugnance; whether his ambition led him to prefer the command of a separate army, or that he considered it as more advisable to maintain himself in the upper and mountainous parts of New Jersey, in order to be always ready to annoy the right flank of the British army. He was drawn from this langor by an event which threw him into a painful captivity, and which filled all America with profound regret, where his zeal, his intelligence, and his military skill, were held in the highest consideration.



Being at a place called Baskinbridge, distant about twenty miles from the quarters of the enemy, he thought himself so out of all danger that he neglected the usual precautions. He took up his quarters at a house considerably removed from the main body, where he remained with a slender guard. Colonel Harcourt, who scoured the country with his cavalry, was informed of this circumstance by a loyalist, and immediately galloped towards the place where Lee was so incautiously lodged. The colonel appearing suddenly, secured the sentinels without noise, and darting into the house, arrested the general. He caused him immediately to mount a very swift horse, and with the same promptness and good fortune conducted him prisoner to New York. This news spread as much consternation among the Americans, as alacrity among the English; who boasted that they had seized the *Palladium* of America. This capture of general Lee occasioned transports of joy even at the court of Saint James, as if some great victory had been obtained, or as if this incident was more fortunate than the conquest of New Jersey itself, and the fair prospect opened of soon entering the city of Philadelphia. From this time there arose a violent controversy between the chiefs of the two parties, relative to the manner in which general Lee and the other prisoners of war should be treated. General Gage, when he was invested with the command, had always refused to consent to the exchange of prisoners. There resulted from it a deplorable system of cruelty on the one part as well as on the other. But when general Howe appeared at the head of the British army, either because his character was more humane than that of his predecessor, or that he had received particular instructions from his government, or finally, that he was constrained to it by the great number of English who were fallen into the power of the Americans, he had agreed from time to time to make exchanges. But when he found himself in possession of general Lee, he refused to fulfil with respect to him the laws of war, and caused him to be closely confined, as if he had been a prisoner of state. He advanced as a reason for his conduct, that Lee being invested with the rank of an officer in the English army, he was to be considered as a deserter, and a traitor. He had formerly received, it is true, his half pay as a British officer; but upon the breaking out of hostilities, he had resigned his rank in England, to be at liberty to enter the service of America. But this resignation had not perhaps arrived seasonably; or the hatred borne him by the government and British generals having more power over them than the usage of civilised nations, they affected to consider and treat him rather as a prisoner of state than as a prisoner of war. As Washington had no British officer in his power of equal rank with general Lee, he had proposed to general Howe to give six Hessian officers in exchange for him; adding, that in case this offer should not be accepted, he demanded at least that Lee should be

treated in a manner suitable to his rank, and this not only in conformity with the laws of nations, but also in reciprocity for the good treatment which the English officers that were prisoners received on the part of the Americans. General Howe persisted in his refusal; the Congress then resorted to reprisals. They ordered that lieutenant-colonel Campbell and five Hessian officers should be imprisoned and treated as general Lee. This order was executed even with more rigor than it prescribed. The lieutenant-colonel, being then at Boston, was thrown into a dungeon destined for malefactors. Washington blamed this excess; he knew that Lee was detained but not ill treated. He also apprehended reprisals, since there were more Americans in the hands of the English, than English in the hands of the Americans. He wrote with great earnestness to Congress upon this subject, but without effect; lieutenant-colonel Campbell and the Hessians were not liberated until general Howe had consented to consider Lee as a prisoner of war.

During these altercations the exchange of prisoners was entirely suspended. Those in the hands of the English at New York had to experience every sort of ill treatment. They were shut up in churches and in other places, exposed to all the inclemency of the air. They were not allowed sufficient nourishment; their fare was scantied even of coarse bread, and certain aliments which excited disgust. The sick were confounded with the healthy, both equally a prey to the most shocking defect of cleanliness, and exposed to the outrages of the soldiers, and especially of the loyalists. Nothing alleviated their sufferings. A confined and impure air engendered mortal diseases; more than fifteen hundred of these unfortunate men perished in a few weeks. It was believed that so much cruelty was purposely exercised with a view of constraining the prisoners to enlist under the royal standard. It is certain, at least, that the officers of the king incessantly exhorted them to it. But they all refused; preferring a certain death to the desertion of their country. The fate of the officers was not much less deplorable. Despoiled of every thing by the rapacity of the English soldiers, they were abandoned to all wants. Some of them, though wounded and without clothing, were carted through the streets of New York for the sport of the populace. In the midst of hisses and imprecations, they were denominated rebels and traitors. Several were even caned for having attempted to procure some relief for their soldiers, who were perishing with hunger and disease in their infected dungeons. Washington had addressed frequent and bitter complaints to general Howe of this barbarous conduct towards prisoners of war. The English general answered by denials, by excuses, and even by recriminations. But that he was culpable, is proved by his having refused the offer of the American general, who proposed to send an agent to New York to provide for the wants of the prisoners.

Hence the hatred between the two people acquired a new degree of violence. At length, those who had survived so many evils, were exchanged, and set at liberty. But such was their miserable condition that many died on the way before they could revisit their country and all the objects of their affection. There arose new difficulties upon this subject between the two generals; the Englishman insisting that his prisoners should be restored even in exchange for the dead, and the American refusing it. All this affair of prisoners proves but too clearly that in civil wars, friends become worse than natural enemies, and the most civilised nations no better than barbarians. But the greater part of these inhuman excesses are incontestably attributable to the English.

After général Lee had fallen into the hands of the enemy, general Sullivan, who succeeded him, manifested greater promptitude in obeying the orders of Washington. He crossed the Delaware at Phillipsburgh, and joined him about the last of December; this reinforcement carried the American army to not far from seven thousand men. But the greater part of these troops completed their engagement with the year, and they were upon the point of a total dissolution.

While the English pursued the relics of the American army through the plains of New Jersey, and the latter, happy in having been able to cross the Delaware, found itself almost without hope, fortune did not show herself more propitious to the cause of the revolution upon the coasts of Rhode Island. Admiral sir Peter Parker, and general Clinton with four brigades of English as well as Hessians, had undertaken an expedition against this province, on board a numerous squadron. The provincials not expecting this attack, were totally unprepared for defence; they consequently abandoned Rhode Island without resistance to the English, who occupied it the same day that Washington passed the Delaware. This loss was of great importance, as well from the situation of the province as because the American squadron, under commodore Hopkins, was compelled to withdraw as far up the Providence river as it was practicable, and to continue there blocked up and useless for a long time. The English also occupied the two neighboring islands of Conanicut and of Prudence. Two pieces of cannon fell into their power, but they made few prisoners. The conquest of Rhode Island was of great utility for their ulterior operations; from this province they could harass Massachusetts; and the reenforcements that general Lincoln had assembled with the intention of conducting them to the army of Washington, were detained in that province, to observe general Clinton, and prevent him from disturbing its tranquillity. Even Connecticut shared the alarm, and retained the reenforcements it was upon the point of sending to the camp of the Delaware.



The English, in like manner desirous to prevent the colonies of the south from transmitting succours to those of the middle, which they intended to attack, renewed, during the summer of the present year, their negotiations with the loyalists and with the savages of the upper parts, in order to induce them to act against Georgia, the two Carolinas and Virginia. Notwithstanding the little success which had, in the preceding year, attended the enterprises of the *Regulators* and the Scotch emigrants, the English agents, and particularly one Stuart, a man of extreme activity and audacity, flattered themselves with the hope of obtaining a more efficacious cooperation on the part of the Indian tribes. They were as lavish of exhortations and promises as of gold and presents. They gave out that a strong corps of English would disembark in West Florida; that traversing the territory of the Creeks, the Chickasaws, and the Cherokees, they would join with the warriors of these nations, and invade the two Carolinas and Virginia; while, at the same time, a numerous fleet and powerful army should attack the coasts. Stuart addressed circulars to the loyalists, inviting them to come and put themselves under the royal standard, erected in the country of the Cherokees; he urged them to bring with them their horses, their cattle, and provisions of every sort, for which they should be paid a liberal price. The loyalists, who remembered too well their recent defeat, made no movement of importance. But the Indians, excited by the words and presents of the emissaries, no less than by the probabilities of success, and their thirst of pillage, assembled in considerable numbers, and manifested great animosity against the colonies. The Six Nations themselves, who till this epoch had observed a strict neutrality, began to waver, and had already committed hostilities upon their borders. The Creeks, still more audacious, took the field, and displayed their accustomed ferocity. But having found that deeds did not correspond with words, and that the promised succours did not appear, they desisted, and demanded a pardon, which was easily granted them. They manifested afterwards so much regard for their oaths, or so much distrust for the promises of the English, or finally, such profound terror, that when the Cherokees not long after urged them for succours, they answered that they had buried the hatchet so deep that it could not be found. But the Cherokees listened only to their fury; they fell furiously upon the colonies, exercising frightful ravages, scalping and mutilating their prisoners. They massacred with the same barbarity those who were able to carry arms, and those who were not; old men, women, and children, were butchered without discrimination. Their security was increased by the appearance of the fleet under sir Peter Parker, which had arrived in the waters of Charleston. But when this fleet after the unsuccessful attack of fort Moultrie, had abandoned the shores of Carolina, the Cherokees found themselves in a very critical situation.

Having no longer any thing to fear, upon their coasts, the inhabitants of the two Carolinas and of Virginia devoting all their cares to free themselves from this scourge, turned their forces against the savages, who devastated their country. These barbarians were not only defeated in several rencounters, but the Americans pursued them even into their own territory, putting all to fire and sword, burning their habitations, cutting their trees, destroying their corn, and slaying all those who had borne, or still bore arms. This expedition was almost the total ruin of the nation of Cherokees. Those who survived it, submitted to all the conditions of the conqueror, or wanting provisions, took refuge with this Stuart, the author of the war and of their disasters, in West Florida, where the British government was forced to support them. Thus terminated this year the campaign against the savages; it may be observed, that no chastisement was ever more severe, or more deserved, than that which was inflicted upon the nation of the Cherokees. The avaricious and cruel men who excited these barbarians to commit so many horrors, were the more inexcusable, inasmuch as they had received their birth and education under the more clement sky of Europe.

But the order of events recalls us to Canada, where military operations, far from being suspended, were pursued with extreme vigor. We have related in the preceding book, that the Americans had been constrained by the superiority of the British arms, to evacuate all Lower Canada, and even Montreal and fort St. John. They had retired to Crown Point, whither the English were unable to follow them for want of the necessary vessels not only to cross Lake Champlain, but also to combat those the Americans had armed for their defence. Such, however, was the importance to the designs of the English of obtaining an absolute control of the lakes, that general Carleton set himself with all diligence to the equipment of a fleet. His plan was, according to the instructions of the ministry, to penetrate by way of the lakes to the Hudson river, and thus to effect a junction with the army of New York, at Albany. By the execution of this plan, the provinces of New England would have found themselves separated from the others by a powerful and victorious army, and the cause of America would have been exposed to the most imminent perils. Long deliberated in the councils of the British ministers, it was their favorite scheme. And, in effect, the very nature of the places between Canada and New York, appeared to favor this enterprise. With the exception of the heights which are found between the upper extremity of Lake George and the left bank of the Hudson, and which only occupy a space of sixteen miles, the entire passage from one of these provinces to the other, can easily be made by water, first by ascending from the Saint Lawrence into the Sorel, and then traversing the Lakes Champlain and George, or Wood Creek, to the lands which separate it

from the Hudson. This river afterwards leads directly to the city of New York. The English having an immense superiority at sea, Canada being entirely in their power, and as the principal seat of resistance was found in the provinces of New England, while the coasts of New York were peculiarly accessible to maritime attacks, it cannot be denied that this plan of campaign presented great advantages. But the difficulty of the enterprise of general Carleton was equal to its importance. It was requisite to construct, or at least to equip a fleet of thirty vessels of different dimensions, and to arm them with artillery ; the want of materials rendered either of these objects difficult to accomplish. The transportation afterwards in certain places by land, and drawing up the rapids of Saint Theresa and Saint John, of thirty large long boats, a gondola of thirty tons, a number of flat bottomed boats of considerable burthen, with above four hundred batteaux, was an operation which offered not only great obstacles, but even an appearance of impossibility. But the English seamen, from their skill and patience, were not intimidated by it. The soldiers seconded them, and the peasants taken from their rustic labors, were compelled to share the toil. The generals urged forward this laborious undertaking on account of the lateness of the season ; as the winter already approached. It was necessary to pass two lakes of considerable extent ; they had no certain intelligence respecting the force of the enemy in the fortresses of Crown Point and Ticonderoga ; finally, after having worsted him upon Lake Champlain, by means of large vessels, it was to be feared that the squadron would not be able to pass the strait which joins this lake to Lake George, into which however it was absolutely necessary that it should enter. Meanwhile, if it should be possible to surmount so many obstacles, there still would remain to be effected the passage of the woods, the marshes, and the defiles which are found between the point of debarkation and the banks of the Hudson, in order to gain the city of Albany, where only they could meet with such accommodations as would enable them to winter commodiously. But far from appearing discouraged, the English seemed to be animated with new ardor, and the soldiers rivalled their officers in zeal. They felt all the importance of the enterprise, and persuaded themselves that if they could reach Albany before winter, their definitive success would be secured. The brilliant advantages obtained by the army of New Jersey, filled them with emulation ; they were eager to share them, and fearful of arriving too late upon the theatre of glory. They labored therefore with incredible activity ; but notwithstanding all their efforts, the preparations could not be completed, nor the armament fully equipped, till the middle of the month of October. It was numerous, and superior in strength to any that had ever been seen upon these lakes, and would have made no contemptible figure even upon the European seas. The admiral's ship, called the *Inflexible*, carried



eighteen twelve pounders, and was followed by two stout schooners, the one mounting fourteen, the other twelve six pounders; a large flat bottomed radeau, with six twenty-four and six twelve pounders. Twenty vessels of less size carried each a brass piece of ordnance, from nine to twenty-four pounders, or howitzers. Several long boats were equipped in the same manner. Besides these, there was a great number of boats and tenders of various sizes, to serve as transports for the troops, baggage, warlike stores, provisions, and arms of every sort.

The whole fleet was commanded by captain Pringle, a sea officer of great experience; it was manned by a select body of seamen, animated with an extreme desire of victory. The land troops encamped in the environs, prepared, as soon as the navigation of the lake should be secured, to fall upon the enemy. Three thousand men occupied Ile aux Noix, and as many were stationed at Fort Saint John, the remainder was distributed either in the vessels or in the neighboring garrisons.

The Americans united all their forces to resist such formidable preparations. Generals Schuyler and Gates were at their head, and Arnold showed himself every where, inspiring the soldiers with that ardent courage for which he was himself distinguished.

As the event of the campaign upon this frontier depended totally upon naval operations, the Americans exerted themselves to the utmost of their power to arm and equip a fleet capable of opposing that of the enemy. But their success little corresponded with their efforts. Besides the want of materials for construction, they had not a sufficiency of other stores, and their seaports were so occupied in the building of privateers and ships for the service of Congress, that few carpenters could be spared. Accordingly, notwithstanding the activity and perseverance of the American generals, their squadron amounted to no more than fifteen vessels of different sizes, two brigs, one corvette, one sloop, three gallies, and eight gondolas. Their largest vessel mounted only twelve six, and four pounders. But that this armament might not want a chief whose intrepidity equalled the danger of the enterprise, the command of it was given to general Arnold. It was expected of him to maintain, upon this new element, the reputation he had acquired upon land. The American army, notwithstanding all the obstacles it had encountered, and the ravages of the smallpox, still amounted to eight or nine thousand men; it was assembled under the cannon of Ticonderoga, after having left a sufficient garrison at Crown Point.

All the dispositions being made on both sides, general Carleton, impatient to conquer, ordered all his naval forces to advance towards Crown Point, intending to attack the enemy there. He had already reached the middle of the lake without having been able to discover him, and was proceeding without any distrust, when all at once the

English perceived the American squadron, which was drawn up with great skill, behind the Island of Valincour, and occupied the passage between the island and the western shore of the lake. This unexpected interview caused a violent agitation on both sides. A fierce engagement immediately ensued. But the wind being unfavorable to the English, they could not display their whole line; the *Inflexible*, and their other vessels of the largest class, took no part in the action. The brig *Carleton*, accompanied by several gun boats, assailed the enemy with singular courage and ability. The Americans supported the combat with equal bravery; it lasted above four hours. The wind continuing to be contrary for the English, captain Pringle perceived that he could not hope to obtain advantages with a part of his forces against all those of the enemy, and accordingly gave the signal of retreat; ordering the fleet to be anchored in a line, in presence of the American squadron.

The Americans had lost in the action their largest brig, which took fire and was consumed, as also a gondola which went to the bottom. They considered it as extremely dangerous to await a second engagement in the anchorage they occupied, and consequently determined to retire under the walls of Crown Point, hoping that the artillery of the fortress would counterbalance the superiority of the enemy's force. Fortune seemed inclined to favor this design of general Arnold; and already his vessels, having lost sight of those of the English, sailed rapidly towards their new station; when suddenly the wind became favorable to the enemy, who pursued and came up with them before their arrival at Crown Point. The battle was immediately renewed with greater fury than at first; it continued upwards of two hours. Those vessels in the meanwhile which were most ahead, crowded sail, and passing Crown Point, ran for Ticonderoga. Only two galleys and five gondolas, remained with general Arnold. With these he made a desperate defence; but his second in command, brigadier general Waterburgh, being taken with his vessel, and the others making but a faint resistance, he determined, in order to prevent his people and shipping from falling into the power of the enemy, to run these ashore and set them on fire. He executed his intention with great address. He remained on board the vessel he commanded, and kept her colors flying, till she was on fire. Though he had been unsuccessful on this occasion, the disparity of strength duly considered, he lost no reputation, but rose on the contrary in the estimation of his countrymen. He had, in their opinion, acquitted himself with no less ability in this naval encounter, than he had done at land before. The Americans, having destroyed whatever could not be carried off, evacuated Crown Point and withdrew to Ticonderoga. General Carleton occupied the former immediately, and the rest of his army came soon after to join him there.

Such was the issue of the expedition which the Americans had undertaken in Canada, with a view of establishing the theatre of war upon the territory of their enemies, before they could attempt to invade their own. Completely masters of Lake Champlain, the English had now no other obstacle to surmount besides the fortress of Ticonderoga, in order to penetrate into Lake George. If Carleton, rapidly availing himself of his advantage, had pushed forward against the enemy, thrown into confusion by defeat, perhaps he might have seized this important place without difficulty. But he was prevented from doing it by a south wind, which prevailed for several days. The Americans made the best use of this time in preparing and increasing their means of defence. They mounted their cannon, constructed new works, and repaired the old, surrounding them with moats and palisades. The garrison was reenforced with extreme expedition; and conformably to the orders of Washington, the oxen and horses were removed into distant places, that the English might not seize them for provision or draught. Meanwhile, general Carleton had not neglected to detach scouting parties upon the two banks of the lake; and, when the wind permitted, some light vessels were also sent towards Ticonderoga to reconnoitre the force of the enemy and the state of the fortress. All the reports agreed that the fortifications were formidable, and the garrison full of ardor. He reflected, therefore, that the siege must be long, difficult, and sanguinary, and concluded accordingly that the possession of this fortress would not indemnify him for all it might cost. The severe season approached; the want of provisions, the difficulty of direct communications with Canada, and the little hope of success from an expedition in the cold and desert regions which separate the river Hudson from Lake George, rendered the wintering upon this lake extremely perilous. In consequence of these considerations, the English general deemed the reduction of Ticonderoga of little utility in his present circumstances, whereas the command of the lakes secured him a clear passage to return in the spring to the attack of this fortress, without exposing his troops to the hardships of a siege, undertaken in the midst of the rigors of winter. After having taken the advice of a council of war, he renounced the project of an attack, and early in November conducted his army back towards Montreal, leaving his advanced posts in Ile aux Noix. But prior to his retreat, from the singular courtesy and humanity of his character, he sent to their homes the American officers who had fallen into his power, administering generously to all their wants. He exercised the same liberality towards the common soldiers. The greater part were almost naked; he caused them to be completely clothed, and set them at liberty, after having taken their oath that they would not serve against the armies of the king. General Carleton was blamed for having taken winter quarters; this resolution



was considered as a mark of weakness, and as highly prejudicial to the success of ulterior operations; since if he had immediately made himself master of Ticonderoga, his troops, after having passed the winter in its vicinity, would have been able to enter the field early the following spring. It is probable, in effect, that the war would, in that case, have had a very different result from what it actually had. But the conquest of a place so strong by nature and by art as Ticonderoga, depended on the resistance which the Americans would have made; and certainly their number, the valor they had displayed in the naval actions, the extreme confidence they had in their chiefs, all announced that their defence would have been long and obstinate. Nor should the consideration be omitted of the difficulty of subsistence, and of the communications with Canada. Be this as it may, the retreat of the English general, and his inaction during the winter, had the most happy results for the Americans. The army which had made the campaign under general Lee, was enabled to effect its junction with that of Washington, upon the banks of the Delaware; and a part of the army of Canada itself could take the same direction, under the conduct of general Gates.

It cannot be doubted, however, that the Americans at this time trod upon the brink of precipices; a single reverse might have completed their ruin. Two important provinces, New York and Rhode Island, as well as the greater part of New Jersey, were fallen into the power of the victorious army. And though the arms of Clinton, equally successful, had arrested their course under the walls of Ticonderoga, it was but too probable that on the return of spring he would make a new effort to carry this fortress, and to penetrate to the banks of the Hudson, in order to operate his junction with the army of New York. As to Washington, it was not to be expected that, while inferior himself to his adversary, he would be in a situation to send back to the army of Canada the troops that were enabled by the cessation of hostilities upon the lakes, to come to join him upon the Delaware.

Though he had received, as we have seen, some reenforcements, he was still as far from being able to match the enemy either in the number, spirit, or discipline of his soldiers, as in the quantity and quality of his munitions of every sort. He was also continually subject to that scourge of the American army, desertion, authorised by the expiration of engagements, which incessantly menaced it with an approaching, and almost total dissolution. It was no slight motive of alarm for the most influential members of Congress, to remark the promptitude with which the inhabitants of the conquered provinces, and especially of New York, hastened to change sides and to take advantage of the proffered pardon.

Some individuals were even seen to enrol themselves under the royal standard; it seemed that they were determined to add to

English civil war, the horrors of American civil war. It was to be feared that their example would prove contagious for the other provinces, and that disaffection would manifest itself on all parts.

The intrigues of governor Tryon, to compass this object, were no longer a secret ; for this very purpose he had been appointed brigadier-general, and his manœuvres had already succeeded in many places. On the contrary, the business of recruiting moved very heavily on the part of the Americans, whereas desertion enfeebled their armies from day to day. To so many evils was joined another more fatal still ; the bills of credit began to depreciate. The government, however, had no other source of revenue. It was not yet sufficiently confirmed to hazard the imposition of taxes, payable in specie ; and this measure would besides have produced only an increase of the evil, by augmenting the discredit of paper ; it was therefore much to be apprehended that money, this principal sinew of war, would ere long be totally wanting. The emission of new bills of credit would infallibly accelerate their daily depreciation ; and yet it was impossible, by reason of the ever increasing exigencies of the public service, to abstain from continual issues. Already there were not wanting those who refused not only to receive them at a discount, but even at any rate whatever. The present time was painful, and the future appeared still more alarming. It was feared by all, and asserted by many, that the tomb of independence was not far from its cradle ; some even openly blamed the Congress for having declared independence, and thereby closed all avenue to an honorable accommodation ; before this declaration, they said, we could treat with honor, but since, not without shame, and even becoming the fable of the universe.

Surrounded by obstacles so numerous and so fearful, the Congress lost none of their firmness, and resolved to set fortune at defiance. Far from betraying any symptoms of despair, they manifested greater confidence than ever, and appeared to admit no doubt respecting the eventual success of the great enterprise in which they were engaged. They knew that constancy triumphs over fate. Full of a noble ardor, they preferred the dangers of war to those of peace. The admirable fortitude with which they sustained the assaults of adverse fortune, when a common ruin seemed ready to engulf them with the cause they supported, must eternally attach to their names the glory of having laid the foundations of a new state. The nations of the earth rendered the homage of their admiration to so much magnanimity.

When at first, the ship of America, impelled by propitious breezes, seemed about to enter the port in safety, the wisdom of the pilots was universally applauded ; but in the midst of a tremendous tempest, their intrepidity and their constancy shone with a splendor still more dazzling. The people of Europe felt an increase of affection

for the Americans, and of hatred against England, for attempting to reduce to slavery so generous a nation. So natural it is to the human heart to take an interest, from the sentiment of its independence, in the efforts made by the weak against the powerful, or from commiseration to sympathise with the brave in their struggles against the perversity of fate. Thus the Americans honored their reverses by virtues, at the epoch when the public fortune appeared upon the verge of ruin, and no cheering ray was seen to gleam in the perspective.

We have already mentioned the measures taken by the Congress, in order to reenforce the army by new levies, to remedy the danger resulting from the shortness of engagements, and to call into the field the provincial militia. As if they had intended to defy the presence and the menaces of a formidable enemy, they employed themselves in drawing up various articles of confederation and perpetual union between the states, that each of them might know its particular authority within, and its reciprocal duties towards the others; as also to ascertain the extent of executive power with which it was requisite that Congress should be invested. These articles were adopted in the sitting of the fourth of October, and immediately sent to the respective assemblies of each state for approbation. The principal were the following;

‘The thirteen states confederated under the name of the *United States of America*.

‘They all and each obligated themselves to contribute for the common defence, and for the maintenance of their liberties.

‘Each particular state preserved the exclusive right of regulating its internal government, and of framing laws in all matters not included in the articles of the confederation, and which could not any way be prejudicial to it.

‘No particular state was either to send or to receive ambassadors, enter into negotiations, contract engagements, form alliances, or make war, excepting in case of sudden attack, with any king, prince, or power whatsoever, without the consent of the United States.

‘No individual holding any magistracy, office or commission whatsoever from the United States, or from any one of them, was allowed to accept of any presents, nor any offices, or titles of any kind whatever, from any foreign king, prince, or potentate.

‘No assembly was to confer titles of nobility.

‘No state was to make alliances or treaties of what kind soever with another, without the consent of all.

‘Each particular state had authority to maintain in peace as well as in war the number of armed ships and of land troops, judged necessary by the general assembly of all the states, and no more.

‘There should be a public treasury for the service of the confederation, which was to be replenished by the particular contributions



of each state ; the same to be proportioned according to the number of inhabitants of every age, sex or condition, with the exception however of Indians.

‘ A general Congress was to be convoked every year on the first Monday of November, to be composed of deputies from all the states ; it was invested with all the powers that belong to the sovereigns of other nations.’ These powers were exactly enumerated.

‘ Every individual holding any office, and receiving either salary, wages, or emolument whatsoever, was thereby excluded from Congress.

‘ There was to be a council of state, composed of one deputy for each province, nominated annually by his colleagues of the same state, and in case these should not agree, by the general Congress.’ Each state was to have but one vote.

‘ During the session as well as the recess of the general Congress, the council of state was to be charged with the management of the public affairs of the confederation, always restricting itself however within the limits prescribed by the laws, and particularly by the articles of the confederation itself.

‘ The province of Canada was invited to enter into the Union.

The Congress afterwards desiring to revive the courage of those who had suffered themselves to be intimidated by reverses, and to prevent their sentiments from changing with fortune, issued a proclamation wherein they represented anew the justice of their cause, their long and fruitless supplications, the cruel proceedings of the ministers, the necessity of the declaration of independence, and the unanimous approbation with which it had been received. Then followed the enumeration of all the successes which had attended the American arms in the northern provinces ; the English driven from Boston, repulsed before Charleston, arrested in their progress at Ticonderoga. Finally, the American people were invited to consider the immense value of the prizes made at sea, the abundance of provisions, and the probability of soon seeing the army suitably clothed and equipped. All the citizens, and especially those of Pennsylvania, of New Jersey, and of the neighboring states, were exhorted to show themselves united and firm in the defence of country. ‘ Consider,’ said the proclamation, ‘ that the present state of our affairs is not to be attributed to any faults of the generals, or want of valor in the soldiers, but to the shortness of the term of enlistments. Reflect, that foreign princes have already furnished us with a multitude of articles necessary to war, and be assured that we shall receive from them succours still more efficacious. Be not wanting to yourselves, nor suffer the rich and populous city of Philadelphia to fall into the power of the enemy ; let not the occasion escape of overwhelming his principal army, now it is far from the ships which form so great

a part of its force. The loss of Philadelphia would not be followed by the ruin of our cause, but wherefore should the enemy enjoy this triumph? Let us arrest his career, let us baffle his efforts; let us prove to the friends of America, even the most distant, that we are all animated with one same spirit, and with one only will, to defend against cruel enemies what man holds, and ought to hold, the most dear. Remember, that the success of our efforts will secure the eternal repose and safety of the United States, and attach to our names an immortal glory; stand firm, therefore, and preserve yourselves for the day of victory; be prepared for a happier destiny.'

Desirous that the authority of religion should encourage and confirm the people in their fidelity, the Congress recommended, that the assemblies of the different states should appoint a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to obtain from the clemency of the Most High, prosperity for the arms and success for the just cause of America.

But the danger increasing continually, and the enemy approaching the banks of the Delaware, the Congress upon the representations of generals Putnam and Mifflin took the resolution on the twelfth of December, to withdraw from Philadelphia, and adjourned themselves to the twentieth of the same month at Baltimore, in Maryland.

The departure of Congress spread great consternation in the city, from fear as well of the English as of the loyalists, who were very numerous there, though a part of them had repaired to the commissioners, to avail themselves of the amnesty. It was greatly apprehended that they would seek to disturb the public tranquillity; already, by their cries and menaces, they had prevented the fortification of the city, which it had been intended to accomplish. The greater part of the Quakers belonged to this party. Washington had found it necessary to send to Philadelphia a numerous corps under the command of lord Sterling, in order to support the friends of the revolution, and to repress its adversaries.

The Congress being assembled at Baltimore, in consideration of the imminent peril, which seemed to exact the dictatorial authority, decreed, that having the most entire confidence in the wisdom, vigor, and uprightness of general Washington, they invested him with the most ample and complete powers to levy and organise in the most expeditious mode, from any or all of the United States, sixteen battalions of infantry, in addition to those already voted by Congress, and to appoint the officers; to raise, equip, and provide with officers, three thousand light horse, three regiments of artillery, and a corps of engineers; and to establish their pay; to call into service the militia of the several states; to form such magazines of provisions, and in such places, as he should think proper; to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of brigadier-general, and to fill up all va-

cancies in every other department in the American armies ; to take, wherever he might be, whatever he might want for the use of the army, if the inhabitants would not sell it, allowing a reasonable price for the same ; to arrest and confine persons who refused to take the continental currency, or were otherwise disaffected to the American cause ; returning to the states of which they were citizens, their names and the nature of their offences, with the proofs to substantiate them. It was resolved that these extraordinary powers should be vested in general Washington during the term of six months, unless sooner determined by Congress.

Thus the rulers of America, urged by extreme peril, and confiding in the virtue of the captain-general, reposed on him alone the entire weight of the war. In the midst of so many reverses, not a single American was heard to hint a suspicion of treason, or even of negligence or incapacity in the chiefs of the army ; nothing especially diminished the respect and confidence of which the commander-in-chief was the object. A remarkable example of moderation and popular reserve. Pride had not persuaded this people that they were invincible, and ambition had not rendered them suspicious. They attributed their defeats to the force of things, and not to the faults of their generals. This confidence in the good faith of their defenders entitled them to find, and they did find, those that were faithful. Too often, on the contrary, the people of other countries, prone to suspicions, lending a credulous ear to the suggestions of envy, irritated by reverses, or intoxicated by success, experience to their cost, that whoever has no confidence in others, finds none in return.

As it was essential to provide pecuniary resources, the Congress passed a law authorising a loan of five millions of dollars, at the annual interest of four per cent. The faith of the United States was pledged for the reimbursement of the capital, at the end of three years, and of the interest annually. For this purpose they established a loan office in each of the United States, to be superintended by a commissioner appointed by the said states respectively, who should receive a commission of one eighth per cent. on all monies that should be brought into the office. A short time after, observing that the loan made little progress, the interest was raised to six per cent.

With the same intention, the Congress also created a lottery, consisting of one hundred thousand tickets, each ticket divided into four billets at ten, twenty, thirty or forty dollars each, and to be drawn in four classes. This lottery, after deduction of the prizes, was to raise the sum of fifteen hundred thousand dollars. The holders of the fortunate billets might receive under certain conditions, a treasury bank note for the prize or prizes drawn, payable at the end of five years, and an annual interest on the same of four per cent. It was hoped thus to amass a considerable sum, as well by the gain of the lottery, as by the loan of the prizes. These operations had besides



another object ; by obviating the necessity of emitting new bills of credit, they tended to enhance the value of those in circulation. But the evil was already so great, that if these remedies were not altogether useless, at least they could afford but little palliation. It was therefore deemed necessary to resort to more efficacious means. As it was especially in Pennsylvania that the paper money was depreciated, the Congress decreed, that the council of safety of this province, should take the most prompt and effectual measures for punishing those who should refuse the bills, and that the general should lend assistance to carry into effect the resolutions of the council. This committee resolved that whoever should refuse to receive the bills of credit in payment of any debt or contract, or as the price of any commodity or merchandise whatsoever, or who should demand a greater price in bills, than in coined money, should be considered for the first time, as an enemy of society, and should lose either the amount of his debt, or of the article sold ; which should be considered thenceforth as the property of the debtor or of the purchaser. He was punished besides with a fine more or less considerable, according to the value of the sums stipulated. But in case of relapse, independently of the penalties above mentioned, the delinquents were to be banished or confined in such mode and place as the council of safety should think proper. Several offenders against this law, having been condemned to shut their shops and to cease their traffic, some even having been banished ; the former were permitted to return to their commerce, and the latter to their homes, in the hope that the remembrance of past punishment, and the apprehension of future, would determine them to abstain from these practices, so prejudicial to the public credit, and to the cause of independence.

A short time after, the Congress perceived that not only the authority of the council of safety in Pennsylvania, had proved insufficient to check the depreciation of the continental paper in that province, but that the evil began to manifest itself also in the others. They deemed it therefore expedient to labor directly themselves to prevent this scourge, and decreed that whoever in any purchase, sale or bargain, of whatsoever nature, should presume to rate gold and silver coin at a higher value than the bills of credit issued by Congress, should be declared an enemy to the liberty of the United States, and should lose the price stipulated of the transaction in which this difference of value should have been made. They further decreed, that the provincial assemblies should be requested to constitute the bills lawful money, that could not be refused in payment of debts, whether public or private ; and that the refusal should operate the extinction of the debt. The assemblies took the measures which appeared to them proper to fulfil the intentions of Congress. The first effect of these different regulations was, that all vendible articles rose in proportion to the depreciation of paper ; which seemed to

increase in the ratio of the efforts that were made to prevent it. Another consequence was, that the debtors liberated themselves from the claims of their creditors with a money continually declining in value; and though this year the discount was not considerable, since an hundred dollars in specie might be had for one hundred and four in paper, many private fortunes suffered from it; and the example became pernicious. In order to arrest so serious an evil, the Congress invited the provincial assemblies to become responsible for the redemption of the bills it had emitted, hoping that the guaranty of each state for its proportional part, added to that of Congress, might restore the public confidence. It was also thought very proper that the assemblies of the several states should impose without delay, such taxes as they might judge, from the condition of the people, could be best supported, and collected with the least difficulty. The Congress promised, that the sums produced by these taxes should be passed to the credit of each state in liquidation of their proportion of the public debt. The assemblies conformed to the recommendations of Congress; and this body also decreed another loan of two millions of dollars. But all these measures produced little or no effect, from the pressure of the times, the uncertainty of the future, and the abundance of bills already emitted, from the facility and the need which the Congress had, as well as the particular states, to put more into circulation every day.

But whatever might prove to be the success of the efforts of Congress to raise troops, to maintain the public credit, and to wrest victory from the hands of the enemy, they well knew that if the European powers came not promptly to the succour of America, she could cherish but a feeble hope of triumph. Fortunately it was known that these powers, and especially those whose naval forces rendered their assistance of the most importance, at the head of whom was France, were all disposed to favor America, either out of hatred towards England, or from the prospect of private advantages. Independently of the general inclinations of the European nations, these political sentiments manifested themselves by no equivocal tokens. The American ships were received in the French and Spanish ports, in Europe as well as in the West Indies, as belonging to a nation not only friendly, but moreover as belonging to a nation really and absolutely independent. The French and the Spaniards derived an immense advantage from it; they began to reap the fruits of this commerce with America, whereof England had hitherto monopolised the exclusive benefit. Nor did they restrict themselves to receiving the Americans with cordiality in their ports; they also permitted their privateers publicly to sell therein the prizes they had taken from the English, whether in Europe or in the West Indies. The remonstrances which the British ministers had addressed upon this subject to the courts of Versailles and of Madrid, had not produced any

sensible effect. It was no longer a secret that there daily departed from the ports of France, ships laden with munitions of war for America. There was also a fact which the English could in no shape endure, and against which they raised a violent clamor; not only, as we have related, were the American privateers received into the ports of the French West Indies, where they sold their prizes, and provided themselves with all necessary articles, but no small number of the French themselves fitted out privateers under the American flag, and, furnished with the commissions of Congress, infested every sea, and depredated upon the English commerce; which procedure, as the French government did not interdict, it was necessary to conclude that it approved. There was remarked also in France a general inclination in all classes, and especially among the noblesse, to enter into the service of the United States; already several of these last were arrived in America, and had treated with the Congress; among others, the Chevalier *de Fermoy*, appointed brigadier-general in the American armies, and M. de Portail, an officer of distinguished talents and valor, who was placed at the head of the engineers, a corps as yet very imperfectly organised in America. Never, in any other war, had the French, naturally so propense to military enterprises, manifested an equal ardor to place themselves under the colors of a foreign power. If this enthusiasm may be attributed in part to the political opinions which then prevailed generally in Europe, nevertheless, it must chiefly be imputed to the known disposition of the government. It is even extremely probable that France would have declared war against Great Britain sooner than she did, if Louis XVI. had been of a less pacific character. England saw with as much solicitude, as the Americans with hope, the preparations that were made with incredible activity in the ports of France and of Spain.

If the British ministers demanded the reason of them, they were answered, that a discussion with Portugal rendered an approaching rupture with that kingdom a thing to be apprehended; that the seas were covered with English fleets, and American privateers, and that independently of so furious a maritime war, such armies were sent by England into the New World as there never had been example of; that consequently France and Spain owed it to themselves to increase their forces, for the protection of their commerce and the security of their colonies. It was observed, also, that it appeared sufficiently surprising that those, who, not content with putting in motion all their national troops, had also despatched to America a large army of foreign mercenaries, should find it extraordinary that their neighbors should stand upon their guard against all the events with which they might be menaced. These explanations were by no means satisfactory to the English government, and in no degree diminished the hopes of the Americans, who saw clearly that the



motives alleged were far from corresponding with the immensity of the preparations. It had never been questioned that the family compact, concluded in 1761, between his most christian majesty and the catholic king, was chiefly designed to unite and confederate all the branches of the house of Bourbon, in order to reduce the power of England; and what more favorable occasion could present itself than the American war?

Such evidently was the object of the extraordinary preparations of France and Spain; and if, instead of those profound lawyers who then directed the counsels of England, the energetic earl of Chatham, or some other statesman of his stamp, had guided the helm of state, it is impossible to doubt that England would at that very time have declared war against the house of Bourbon. Experience has proved, this time, that fortune assists the bold, and that this world belongs to him that can seize it. As to Holland, if, being less warlike than France and Spain, she made no armaments that could give umbrage, at least her merchants, attracted by the lure of gain, supplied the Americans abundantly with munitions, with arms, and with whatever they had need of to sustain the war. All the other powers of Europe appeared to be animated, more or less, with the same spirit. Portugal alone persisted in fidelity to England, and would never consent to supply the Americans with arms or munitions, or that their privateers should be received into any Portuguese port.

Maturely reflecting upon this state of things, and urged by necessity, the Congress resolved to make the most of the present occasion. The entire league that was forming against England had France for its foundation, or rather for its heart; accordingly, so early as the beginning of the year 1776, the Congress had sent Silas Deane to reside near the French government, in order to penetrate its intentions respecting America. He was instructed to neglect no efforts to dispose minds in her favor, and to obtain immediately all the succours of arms and munitions that circumstances might admit of. He acquitted himself of his mission with extreme diligence, especially in what related to the material part. He succeeded in obtaining supplies from private companies as well as from individual contractors, among whom should be mentioned *Caron de Beaumarchais*, who manifested in this transaction an activity no less advantageous to himself, than to the Americans. These arms and warlike stores were openly shipped in American vessels, or privately put on board those of France. Silas Deane did more; he found means to obtain them from the royal arsenals. They delivered him fifteen thousand muskets, which he hastened to expedite for America, where they were of essential utility. He treated with all those French gentlemen who were desirous of serving under the standard of Washington, but not always to the satisfaction of Congress, who sometimes could not confirm the conditions, or even the choice of persons, made by their envoy.

But independence being declared, and military operations having taken an alarming turn, the Congress had thought it expedient to send men of greater authority, that a solemn embassy, worthy to represent the republic, might bear to the king, Lewis XVI, the homage of their singular attachment and respect. They wished, especially, that, by the agency of these new ministers, what was only a simple desire, might be rendered an efficacious will, and that the effect should finally follow the intention. Accordingly, in their sitting of the twenty-sixth of September, they appointed commissioners to the court of France, Franklin, Jefferson and Deane, all men of singular address, and excellent judgment. But Jefferson having excused himself, he was replaced by Arthur Lee. Their instructions were, to continue to procure arms and munitions; to obtain permission from the government to fit out in the French ports, at the expense of the United States, a number of ships of war, in order to harass the commerce of England; and finally, to use all proper means to induce the court of France to conclude a treaty of alliance, of which the Congress had communicated the plan to their commissioners. They were also directed to solicit a loan of ten millions of francs, or at least of six, and even of four, in case they should not be able to obtain more. But, above all things, they were to endeavor to procure the recognition of the independence of the United States. The Congress, knowing that what caused the indecision of foreign princes on this point, was the fear that the Americans might abandon them all at once, after having engaged them to espouse their cause, and return to their ancient submission, enjoined it upon their commissioners to exert all their endeavors to persuade his most christian majesty that the United States would never again come under the sceptre of the king of England; that the confidence he might deign to place in their efforts and constancy, should not in any time be deceived; that there never should be granted to the English any exclusive traffic, or any commercial advantages and privileges greater than those that should be conceded to the subjects of France. The Congress proposed, besides, that, in case of war between France and Great Britain, the United States and France should reciprocally obligate themselves to communicate to each other the negotiations of peace that might take place, in order that each party might, if so disposed, participate therein. The commissioners were ordered to solicit a new supply of twenty or thirty thousand muskets, with a certain quantity of artillery, and abundant munitions, all to be conveyed to America in French vessels, but at the expense of the United States. Finally, that the hopes of advantages to be derived from an alliance with the Americans, might be seconded by the fear of the detriment that would result from their reunion with England, the Congress strictly charged their envoys to give out that notwithstanding the good will of the United States, they would not be able unassisted, to hold out for any length of time against

the greatly superior power of Great Britain ; that therefore it was to be feared, if they were abandoned to themselves, that they would be forced to submit, and that the British government would gain by conquest what would never have been yielded by consent. Then, as to Spain, in order to remove the apprehensions she might have conceived of a revolt in her colonies, the commissioners were authorised to assure her by the most energetic protestations, and to persuade her, that the Spanish colonies should, in no event, ever receive any molestation from the United States. Finally, it was prescribed them to use all vigilance, in order to discover whether the British cabinet had opened any new negotiations in Europe for subsidising still other mercenary troops to be sent against America ; and in such case they were to endeavor to obtain the interference of France, to defeat so pernicious a design.

Furnished with these instructions, the American envoys commenced their voyage. Franklin arrived at Nantz the thirteenth of December, and a few days after, at Paris. For a long time there had not appeared in this city a man more venerable or more venerated, as well in consideration of his age, which already exceeded seventy years, as for the superiority of his genius, the vast extent of his knowledge, and the brilliant renown of his virtues. At no epoch, perhaps, have the French, naturally so fond of novelties, manifested an equal expectation. Their conversations, their writings, even their thoughts, appeared to have no other object but the cause of America. It found among them only admirers and zealous partisans. Accordingly, from the moment the American envoy was arrived in their capital, his person, his actions, his words, his opinions, became the object of public curiosity. Nor can it be denied that he assumed with sagacity a demeanor well suited to the situation of his country and to his own. He presented himself in every place as the citizen of an unfortunate country, reduced to extremities by the cruelty of England. Who could remark his hoary locks, and tottering walk, without reflecting that this aged man had traversed an immense ocean to recommend the cause of his country to those who were able to embrace its defence ? ‘Never before,’ it was exclaimed, ‘has so meritorious a work been proposed to French generosity ; France is the refuge of the unfortunate, the protectress of the oppressed. The war waged by England against her colonies is impious and barbarous ; the blood she sheds, is innocent blood ; it is only by the tutelary assistance of our king that the Americans can hope to be extricated from their cruel embarrassments, and to enjoy at length a secure and tranquil existence.’ Franklin soon made choice of a retreat at Passy, situated near Paris ; he appeared to deplore in this retirement the misfortunes of America. A rumor got abroad, and perhaps it was purposely circulated, that the British government, taking umbrage at his presence, had demanded of the court of France that he should



be sent away. Hence that compassion which is naturally felt for persecuted virtue, was excited among all classes. He became the object of a still more eager curiosity. Whether accompanied by several of his countrymen, cruelly banished or proscribed by the English government, he appeared in the public walks, or whether he presented himself in places of public or private resort, or in the meetings of the literary academies, the multitude thronged to get sight of him. In all places the portraits of Franklin were exhibited; they represented him with a venerable countenance, and dressed, as usual, in rather a singular costume, the more to attract attention. He lived at Passy in a certain style of simplicity, much resembling that of the ancient philosophers. His humorous sayings, and grave aphorisms, caused many to compare him to Socrates. The name of Franklin was upon the lips of every body; and the mode, which so often in France directs public attention upon vain frivolities, had this time attached itself to an object worthy of all the consideration of the observer.

But the politic sage, however he might have been gratified in having drawn upon himself and upon his country the attention and interest of a people so renowned for the gentleness of their manners, desired to obtain more real advantages. Employing as much dexterity as mystery, he visited the ministers assiduously, and availed himself of the distinguished reception he found with them, to promote the interests of his constituents. His efforts were crowned with the most rapid success; and the moment appeared already at hand, when France would no longer dissemble the vigorous cooperation she had determined to afford the Americans.

But, in the meantime, fortune had shown herself so unpropitious to the Americans in New York and New Jersey, that even the capital of the confederation was in great danger of falling into the hands of the victor. The Congress became apprehensive that when this disastrous intelligence should arrive in Europe, it might have a fatal influence upon the negotiations opened by their envoys with the governments of France and of Spain; and that the interest they had hitherto manifested in favor of America, might be totally extinguished. The Congress therefore determined to renew their protestations to the courts of Versailles and Madrid, and with more energy than before, to assure them that the Americans would persist in their enterprise at all hazards; and at the same time to suggest to these powers that the advantages they would derive from their cooperation should be more considerable than had been promised them at first. The envoys of Congress were instructed to use all their endeavors that France should declare herself against England, by attacking the electorate of Hanover, or any other part of the British possessions, as well in Europe as in the East or West Indies. To arrive at this object, they were ordered to promise the most christian king, that if

his majesty consented to break with Great Britain, the United States would join their forces with his to effect the conquest of the island of Newfoundland and of Cape Breton ; that the subjects of the British king, as well as those of every other power, should be forever excluded from the cod fishery upon these banks, so that the French and the Americans only should have the right to carry it on ; that the king of France should possess in absolute property the half of the island of Newfoundland, provided he would furnish the United States with the naval forces necessary to subdue the province of Nova Scotia ; and that this province, as well as the remaining part of Newfoundland, and the island of Cape Breton, should belong to the American republic. If these offers proved insufficient to decide France, they were to propose further, that the United States were ready to consent that all the English islands of the West Indies that should be conquered in the course of the war by the joint forces of France and America, should become the entire property of his most christian majesty, and moreover, to effectuate these different conquests, that the Americans would furnish provisions at their own expense to the value of two millions of dollars, as also six frigates, completely rigged and equipped, ready for sea ; in a word, that they would deport themselves in all respects as good and faithful allies. Finally, they were authorised to stipulate that all the commerce which should in future be carried on between the United States and the French West Indies, should be exercised exclusively by the vessels belonging to the subjects of his most christian majesty, or to the citizens of the United States. As to the king of Spain, the Congress proposed to engage, in case he would declare war against Great Britain, to assist him in reducing the city and port of Pensacola ; they offered, besides, to conclude with him a treaty of alliance and commerce, similar to that which had been proposed to the king of France. The Americans added, that in case it was true, as it was already reported, that the king of Portugal had driven from his ports with outrage, or confiscated their vessels, the United States would immediately declare war against him, if such was the desire of the courts of France and of Spain. The Congress extended their views still further ; they sent commissioners to the courts of Vienna, of Berlin, and of Tuscany, in all which they had recognised a sincere interest for the cause of America. They desired that these sovereigns should be persuaded of the determination of the United States to maintain their independence. Their agents were ordered, especially to exert themselves with assiduity, in order to induce the emperor of Germany and the king of Prussia to interfere in behalf of America to prevent new levies of German or Russian troops, to its prejudice. They had it also in charge to propose to the court of Berlin a treaty of commerce and amity, provided it was perfectly agreeable to the kings of France and of Spain. Such were the

resolutions adopted by the Congress to confirm the state, threatened, in its infancy, with approaching ruin. But the assiduity with which they prosecuted their political negotiations, in no degree diminished the vigor of their military preparations. They not only manifested no disposition to abandon the design of independence, and come to an arrangement with England, but it is also seen that they made no proposition to the foreign powers that was either demonstrative of despair, or unworthy of a state enjoying the entire plenitude of its force and of its freedom. Certain members of Congress, it is true, proposed resolutions that denoted less confidence and firmness; one, for example, was disposed to authorise the commissioners at the court of France to transfer in favor of that power the absolute monopoly of commerce which had been enjoyed by England; another suggested that France should be offered the exclusive commerce of certain articles; others, finally, proposed a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive. But the fortune of the republic prevailed, which had reserved it a higher destiny. All these propositions were rejected by the wiser and more numerous part of the members of Congress. It was evident that if they had been adopted, they might have been considered as a tacit avowal of the desperate state of affairs, and must consequently have produced an effect directly contrary to that which their authors expected from them. Besides, France had quite other and far more cogent motives for breaking with England, and such as would suffice to induce her to take this resolution, provided the Americans only manifested a determination to combat to the last with unshaken constancy.

The instructions sent by the Congress to their commissioners, were intercepted by the English, who caused them to be published. This gave the Congress no regret; they had no doubt that such an evidence of their unalterable resolution to maintain their independence, in the midst of so many reverses, would convince the European princes who desired the dismemberment of the British empire, that it was time to declare themselves, unless they were willing to see the resistance of the Americans rendered fruitless by the inferiority of their forces, and the conquest of their country.

But whatever was the constancy of Congress, or the attraction of their proposals to foreign sovereigns, they could little expect that, in so deplorable a state of their affairs, they would consent to espouse the cause of the Americans; it being but too natural, in policy, to abandon those who appear to be sinking. Words little avail, when they are unsupported by arms and the smiles of fortune. But she had shown herself so hostile to America towards the conclusion of the present year, as to render it but too probable that two or three cold nights, by freezing the waters of the Delaware, would place in the power of the English, in spite of all the Americans could do to prevent it, the capital of the entire confederation. And even if the



cold should not prove so rigorous as was usual at this season, the army of Washington, already so weak, would be dissolved with the expiration of the engagement of the soldiers, at the end of the year. Nor could it be expected, that in so much adversity new recruits would come forward to replace the disbanded troops. In this state of things, the best that could be expected was, that after the entire submission of the more open provinces, the miserable fragments of the American army would seek refuge in the strongest places, in the forests and inaccessible mountains, when a partisan war would commence, that could have no decisive effect upon the final issue of the war. But Washington was not discouraged; and before the coming of severe frost, or the departure of the greater part of his soldiers deprived him of all power, he resolved by a bold and well directed movement, to make a new trial of the fortune of the republic, by attacking a strong and victorious enemy, who was far from suspecting that he could have the thought of such an attempt. An heroic resolution, for which posterity ought to bear him an eternal gratitude! From this moment, the war suddenly assumed a new face, and victory began at length to incline in favor of the Americans.

Washington had observed that general Howe, either to procure more commodious quarters for his troops in this rigorous season, or to impede the Americans in recruiting, or finally because he believed the war at an end, and his enemy no longer in a condition to act, had too far extended the wings of his army, which occupied the entire province of New Jersey and the left bank of the Delaware, from Trenton down to Burlington. Colonel Ralle, a Hessian officer of great merit, was cantoned in the first of these places, with his brigade of infantry and a detachment of English dragoons, the whole constituting a corps of fourteen or fifteen hundred men. Bordentown, a few miles below, was occupied by colonel Donop, with another brigade of Hessians; and still lower down within twenty miles of Philadelphia, was stationed another corps of Hessians and English. Knowing the extreme weakness of their enemy, and holding him as it were degraded by his recent defeats, they kept a negligent guard. The rest of the army was lodged in places more distant, and principally at Princeton, at New Brunswick, and at Amboy. Washington having attentively considered the extent of the enemy's quarters, conceived the hope of surprising the corps that were nearest to the river, and too remote from the others to be succoured in season. In order to make his attack with more order and effect, he divided his army, which consisted almost entirely in the militia of Pennsylvania and Virginia, into three corps, the first and most considerable of which was to pass the Delaware at Mackenky's Ferry, about nine miles above Trenton. The commander-in-chief, accompanied by generals Sullivan and Greene, had reserved to himself the conduct of this corps, to which a few pieces of artillery

were attached. It was destined to attack Trenton. The second division, under the command of general Irwin, was directed to cross at Trenton Ferry, about a mile below the village of this name, and having reached the left bank, to seize without loss of time, the bridge over the little river Assumpink, in order to intercept the retreat of the enemy when he should be dislodged from Trenton by the division under Washington. Finally, the third corps, commanded by general Cadwallader, was ordered to pass the river at Bristol, and proceed to take post at Burlington. The night of Christmas was appointed for the expedition. The dispositions being made according to the plan above mentioned, the Americans proceeded with admirable order and silence towards the Delaware. The chiefs exhorted their soldiers to be firm and valiant, to wash out the stains of Long Island, of New York, and of New Jersey; they represented to them the necessity, the glory, and the brilliant fruits of victory; they incessantly reminded them that this night was about to decide the fate of their country. An extreme ardor manifested itself throughout the ranks. The three columns arrived in the dusk of evening at the bank of the river. Washington had hoped that the passage of the troops, and transportation of the artillery, might have been effectuated before midnight, so as to have time to reach the destined points by break of day, and to surprise the enemy at Trenton. But the cold was so intense, and the river so obstructed with floating ice, that it was impossible to cross and to land the artillery earlier than four in the morning. All the troops having at length gained the left bank, the first corps was parted into two divisions, one of which, turning to the right, marched towards Trenton, by the road which runs along the river; the other, guided by Washington in person, took the upper or Pennington road. The distance, by either route, being nearly equal, it was hoped that the two columns might arrive at the same time. It was enjoined them to engage in combat without any delay, and after having driven in the outposts, to fall immediately upon the main body of the enemy, at Trenton, without giving him time to recover from his surprise. They exerted all their efforts to arrive before day; but a thick fog, and a mist mingled with sleet, which rendered the road slippery, retarded their march. The two divisions, however, reached Trenton at eight o'clock. Notwithstanding so many obstacles, and the hour already so late, the Hessians of colonel Ralle had no suspicion of the approach of the enemy.

The Americans having, therefore, fallen unexpectedly upon the advanced guards, routed them immediately. Colonel Ralle sent his regiment to their succour, in order to sustain the first shock, and to give time for the rest of his forces to arrange themselves for defence. But the first line involved the second in disorder, and both fell back tumultuously upon Trenton. Colonel Ralle having hastily drawn

out his Hessians, advanced to encounter the enemy in the open field ; but he was mortally wounded in the first onset, and the Americans charging the Germans with great fury, the latter betook themselves to flight, leaving upon the field six pieces of light artillery. They attempted to escape by the road of Princeton, but Washington perceiving it, despatched several companies to preoccupy the way, who received the fugitives in front. Thus, surrounded on every side, the three German regiments of Ralle, of Anspach, and of Knyphausen, were constrained to lay down arms and surrender at discretion. Some few, and chiefly cavalry or light infantry, in all not exceeding five hundred men, succeeded in effecting their escape by the lower road which leads to Bordentown. Another detachment of Hessians, who were out this same morning upon a foraging excursion, at some distance from their camp, warned by the noise, and afterwards by the flight of their countrymen, retired precipitately to Princeton. General Irwin had exerted his utmost endeavors to pass the river at the time prescribed, in order to take part in the action ; but the floating ice was so accumulated, in this part of the river, as to render the passage absolutely impracticable. This part of the Hessians, therefore, had the facility of retiring in safety to Bordentown. General Cadwallader was not more fortunate in the attempt he made to cross lower down, and to take post at Burlington, pursuant to the plan of attack. When a part of his infantry had reached the left bank, it was found impossible to advance with the artillery ; unable, therefore, to act with any effect, and finding himself in a perilous situation, he repassed to the right bank of the Delaware. Thus the design of the commander-in-chief was accomplished only in part ; but the event demonstrated, that if the rigorous cold of this night had not prevented its entire execution, all the royal troops that were stationed in the vicinity of the river, would have been surrounded and taken. The loss of the Hessians, in killed and wounded, amounted only to thirty or forty, but the number of prisoners was at first upwards of nine hundred, and even exceeded a thousand, when all those were collected who had concealed themselves in the houses. After having obtained this success, Washington paused ; not willing to lose by imprudence the advantages he owed to the wisdom of his measures. His forces were not sufficient to cope with those which the English generals could have assembled in a few hours. A strong corps of light infantry was quartered at Princeton, a town only a few miles distant from Trenton ; to this might easily have been joined the brigade of Donop, and other battalions that were cantoned in the neighboring places. The Americans consequently evacuated Trenton, and passed over to the right bank of the river, with their prisoners, and the trophies of their victory. Their generals resolved to make the most of it, in order to revive the courage and confidence of the dispirited people. They caused the captive Hessians to



defile, with a sort of triumphal pomp, through the streets of Philadelphia, followed by their arms and banners. And yet such was the terror inspired by the very name of these Germans, that even at the moment in which they traversed the city as vanquished and prisoners, many of the inhabitants suspected it was only a stratagem of their own leaders to animate them ; so impossible it seemed to them that warriors from Germany should have been overcome by American soldiers. The English appeared to them far less formidable, because they knew them. Man is naturally disposed to fear most those objects of which he has the least knowledge ; the uncouth language, the novel manners, and even the dress of the German soldiers, inspired a certain dread. But when they were satisfied that the spectacle they beheld was not an illusion, words cannot describe their exultation at so unexpected a success ; having at first rated the Hessians far above the English, they now held them as much below. And, in effect, this affair of Trenton had so changed the face of things, that the public mind was rapidly elevated from despondency to an extreme confidence. The English themselves could not remark without astonishment this sudden metamorphosis in an enemy whom they considered as already vanquished and quelled. They were unable to conceive how troops of such high renown had been compelled to lay down arms before militia, hastily collected, ill provided with arms, and totally devoid of discipline. Hence, as it happens in reverses, suspicions, reproaches, and accusations arose on all parts. It was vociferated that the English general had too far extended his quarters ; that colonel Ralle had committed an imprudence, finding himself the weaker, in marching out of his quarters to charge the enemy ; that he had, besides, neglected his guard ; and that his soldiers, instead of being at their posts, were gone out in quest of plunder. However this might have been, the entire British army put itself in motion ; colonel Donop, trembling for himself and for his corps, retired with precipitation, by the way of Amboy, to unite with general Leslie at Princeton ; and general Grant, who with the main body of the army occupied New Brunswick, advanced upon Princeton to join the vanguard, stationed at that place. Lord Cornwallis himself, who was then at New York, on the point of embarking for England, at the news of this fatal event, returned with the utmost expedition into New Jersey. But the Americans felt their courage revive ; on all parts they ran to arms, and the forces of Washington were so increased that he conceived the design of more extensive operations, and thought himself in a situation to attempt an expedition upon the frontiers of New Jersey. Accordingly, he ordered general Cadwallader to pass the Delaware, and take a strong position upon the left bank ; but to advance with extreme caution, and to avoid unexpected rencounters. General Mifflin, with a considerable corps of Pennsylvania militia, had joined

general Irwin, and they both crossed the river. Washington himself followed them immediately, and concentrated all his troops at Trenton. Here the militia of New England, whose term of service was expired, were inclined to quit the army, and go to their homes; but the instances of their generals, and a bounty of ten dollars, induced the greater part of them to remain. The English, who had assembled in great strength in Princeton, resolved to lose no time, but to go and attack Washington in his quarters at Trenton, before he should receive new reenforcements; they also hoped that the expiration of engagements would greatly reduce the number of his soldiers.

1777. The second of January, lord Cornwallis marched with the vanguard towards Trenton, where he arrived about four in the morning. The rear guard was posted at Maidenhead, a village situated half way between Princeton and Trenton; other regiments were on the march from New Brunswick, to reenforce the principal army. Washington, finding the enemy in such force, and so near, retired behind the river of Trenton, also called the Assumpink, where he set about intrenching himself, having first secured the bridge. The English attempted the passage at various points, but every where without success; all the fords being diligently guarded. A cannonade was engaged, which produced little effect, though it lasted until night; the Americans stood firm in their intrenchments. Cornwallis waited for reenforcements, intending to advance to the assault the day following; but his adversary was not disposed to put so much at stake. On the other hand, to repass the Delaware, then more than ever obstructed with floating ice, in the presence of a formidable enemy, was too perilous an operation to be attempted without temerity. Washington therefore found himself anew in a very critical position; but it was then that he embraced a resolution remarkable for its intrepidity. Reflecting that he was advanced too far to be able to retreat without manifest danger, he determined to abandon all at once the banks of the Delaware, and to carry the war into the very heart of New Jersey. He considered that Cornwallis, in all probability, would apprehend being cut off from the province of New York, and fearing besides for the magazines at New Brunswick, which were abundantly stocked for the service of the whole British army, would himself also retire from the river; and thus the city of Philadelphia would be preserved, a great part of New Jersey recovered, and defensive war changed into offensive; advantages which could not but animate the inhabitants with new courage. If the English general persisted in his design, he passed the river, indeed without obstacle, and became master of Philadelphia. But whatever were to be the effects of this disastrous event, it was better to abandon Philadelphia, and preserve the army entire, than to lose at the same time both the one and the other. This plan having been

approved in a council of war, composed of all the generals of the army, dispositions were immediately commenced for carrying it promptly into effect. The baggage was sent down to Burlington; and at one o'clock in the morning, the enemy appearing perfectly tranquil, the Americans rekindled the fires of their camp, and leaving guards at the bridge and fords, with orders to continue the usual rounds and patrols, they defiled with equal promptitude and silence. Taking the road of Allentown, which is the longest, in order to avoid the Assumpink, and the encounter of the enemy at Maidenhead, they proceeded towards Princeton. Three English regiments had lodged there this same night; two of them, at break of day, had renewed their march for Maidenhead. The Americans suddenly appeared and charged them with great impetuosity. But the English defended themselves so vigorously, that the American militia, faced about, and retired in disorder. General Mercer in attempting to rally them, was mortally wounded. Washington seeing the rout of the vanguard, and perfectly aware that the loss of the day would involve the total ruin of his army, immediately advanced at the head of his select corps, composed of the conquerors of Trenton, and restored the battle. The two English regiments overwhelmed by the number and fury of the assailants, were separated, the one from the other, and found themselves in the most perilous position. Colonel Mawhood, who commanded one of them, after having intrepidly sustained the attack for some moments, made a violent effort, and opening his way with the bayonet through the ranks of the enemy, retired in safety to Maidenhead. The other, which formed the rear guard, finding itself, after a vigorous struggle, unable to follow the first, returned by the way of Hillsborough to New Brunswick. The third, which was found still at Princeton, retreated also, after a light conflict, with great precipitation to Brunswick. About one hundred of the English were killed in this affair, and upwards of three hundred made prisoners. The loss of the Americans in slain, was nearly equal; but of this number was general Mercer, an able and experienced officer of the province of Virginia. He was universally regretted, but especially by Washington, who bore him great esteem and affection.

After the combat, the Americans occupied Princeton. At break of day, lord Cornwallis having perceived that the Americans had deserted their camp of Trenton, and soon penetrating what was their design, abandoned in like manner his own, and marched with all expedition towards Brunswick, fearing, lest the baggage and munitions he had accumulated there, should fall into the hands of the enemy. He arrived at Princeton almost at the same time with the American rear guard. Washington, found himself again in imminent danger. His soldiers fell with sleep, having taken no repose for the two preceding days; hunger tormented them, and



they were almost naked in this rigorous season. The enemy who pursued them, besides the advantage of number, had every thing in abundance. Thus situated, far from the hope of continuing to act offensively, it was much for him if he could retire without loss to a place of security ; wherefore, departing abruptly from Princeton, he moved with rapidity towards the upper and mountainous parts of New Jersey. To retard the enemy, he destroyed the bridges over the Millstone river, which runs between Princeton and Brunswick. Having afterwards passed the Rariton, a more considerable river, he proceeded to occupy Pluckemin, where his troops refreshed themselves, after so many toils and sufferings. But soon finding that his army was too feeble, and also that it was daily diminished by maladies and desertion, he resolved to encamp higher up, and in a place of more security. After necessity had constrained him to make trial of fortune by adventurous feats, he was disposed to become again the master of his movements, and to take counsel of prudence alone. He retired, accordingly, to Morristown, in upper Jersey. Cornwallis, despairing of being able to continue the pursuit with success, directed his march to New Brunswick, where he found general Matthews, who, in the violence of his terror, had commenced the removal of the baggage and warlike stores. But Washington, having received the few fresh battalions of infantry, and his little army being recovered from their fatigues, soon entered the field anew, and scoured the whole country as far as the Rariton. He even crossed this river, and penetrating into the county of Essex, made himself master of Newark, of Elizabethtown, and, finally, of Woodbridge ; so that he commanded the entire coast of New Jersey, in front of Staten Island. He so judiciously selected his positions, and fortified them so formidably, that the royalists shrunk from all attempt to dislodge him from any of them. Thus the British army, after having overrun victoriously the whole of New Jersey, quite to the Delaware, and caused even the city of Philadelphia to tremble for its safety, found itself now restricted to the two only posts of New Brunswick and Amboy, which, moreover, could have no communication with New York, except by sea. Thus by an army almost reduced to extremity, Philadelphia was saved, Pennsylvania protected, New Jersey nearly recovered, and a victorious and powerful enemy laid under the necessity of quitting all thoughts of acting offensively, in order to defend himself.

Achievements so astonishing acquired an immense glory for the captain-general of the United States. All nations shared in the surprise of the Americans ; all equally admired and applauded the prudence, the constancy, and the noble intrepidity of general Washington. An unanimous voice pronounced him the savior of his country ; all extolled him as equal to the most celebrated commanders of antiquity ; all proclaimed him the *Fabius of America*. His

name was in the mouth of all; he was celebrated by the pens of the most distinguished writers. The most illustrious personages of Europe lavished upon him their praises and their congratulations. The American general, therefore, wanted neither a cause full of grandeur to defend, nor occasion for the acquisition of glory, nor genius to avail himself of it, nor the renown due to his triumphs, nor an entire generation of men perfectly well disposed to render him homage.

Reposing new confidence in their general, and having seen that it was his arm which had retrieved the public fortune, the Congress decreed that in all councils of war, Washington should not be bound by the plurality of voices, nor by the opinion of the general officers he might think proper to consult. They even preferred that in all circumstances he should take such resolutions as might appear to him the most likely to prove advantageous. The Congress immediately after returned to Philadelphia, with a view of encouraging the people still more. There passed nothing of importance during the rest of the winter and the greater part of the spring, with the exception of some skirmishes, of which the usual effect was to harass and fatigue the English army, and to inspire the Americans with greater confidence in themselves. The royal troops, as we have said, were locked up in the two villages of Brunswick and Amboy, whence they rarely ventured to make excursions; they could not go out to plunder, nor even to forage, without extreme peril. Not only the soldiers of Washington, but even the inhabitants of New Jersey, transported with rage at the shocking excesses committed by the English, and especially by the Hessians, prepared frequent ambuscades for these predatory bands, and exterminated them by surprise. Those who could not bear arms, performed the office of spies, so that whenever the royalists made a movement, the republicans were apprised of it, and prepared to oppose it. This sudden change in the disposition of the inhabitants, who after the occupation of New York, had shown themselves so favorable to the royal cause, must be attributed entirely to the unheard of ferocity with which the English carried on the war. An universal cry was heard in America against the cruelties, the massacres, the rapes, and the ravages, perpetrated by their soldiers. And even supposing that their crimes were exaggerated, the truth is still but too horrible. The Hessians, as if they had believed themselves released from all respect for humanity and justice, knew no other mode of making war but that of carrying devastation into the midst of all the property, whether public or private, of their adversaries. It was published at the time, that the Germans had been taught to believe, that all the lands they could conquer in America should become their own property, which led them to consider the possessors of them as their natural enemies, whom they were bound to exterminate in every possible mode. But, that finding themselves not likely to profit by this expectation, they set about plundering and

destroying whatever they could lay their hands upon. It was also affirmed, that this rapacious soldiery had so burthened themselves with booty, as to become almost incapable of service. The violent hatred which the Americans manifested for the Hessians, rendered them but the more outrageous in their depredations. Men accustomed to liberty, could not behold without abhorrence these brutal mercenaries, 'who, not content,' they said, 'with submitting to be slaves in their own country, are willing, for a few pence, to become the instruments of tyranny with others, and come to interfere in a domestic quarrel, in which they have no interest.' 'Why,' added the Americans, 'have they left their homes in the old world to contribute in the new to the butchery of an innocent and generous people, who had never offended them; who, on the contrary, had exercised a noble hospitality towards a multitude of their ancestors, who sought refuge from a tyranny similar to what their countrymen were now attempting to establish in America?' This language did but the more exasperate the Germans; they manifested their fury by the most atrocious actions. It was a terrible and lamentable spectacle, to behold these fertile fields covered with ashes and with ruins. Friends and foes, republicans and loyalists, all shared a common fate. Wives and daughters suffered violence in the houses, and even before the eyes of their husbands and fathers; many fled into the forests; but could find no refuge even there from the brutal rage of these barbarians, who pursued them. The houses were either burnt or demolished; the cattle either driven off or killed; nothing escaped their thirst of devastation. The Hessian general Heister, far from endeavoring to repress this licentious soldiery, seemed to have given them a free rein. The English general wished, but had not the power, to curb them. The Hessians were as numerous as the English themselves, and it was not thought prudent to offend them. Their example became infectious for the British troops, and they were soon found to vie with the Germans in all the scenes of violence, outrage, cruelty, and plunder. New Jersey presented only the vestiges of havoc and desolation. Complaints arose from all parts of America; and they were echoed throughout Europe, to the heavy reproach of England. Among the indignant nations, the French were especially distinguished; naturally humane, enemies to the English, and partisans of the Americans. It was exclaimed every where, that the English government had revived in the new world the fury of the Goths, and the barbarity of the northern Hordes. But so much immanity returned upon its source, and became more fatal to its authors than to their victims. The few remaining friends that England had, became enemies, and her enemies were filled with new hatred, and a more vehement desire of vengeance.

Citizens of all classes flew to arms with a sort of rage, to expel from their territory, as they said, these infamous robbers. Thus the



excesses of the royal army were not less, and perhaps more, prejudicial to the British cause than even the efforts of Washington and the resolutions of Congress. But it must be admitted, that this ardor of pillage had also contaminated the American army. The houses and property of the unfortunate inhabitants of New Jersey were sacked under pretext that they belonged to loyalists; the officers themselves gave their soldiers the example of depredation. Thus they were pillaged by the Hessians and English as rebels to the king, and by the Americans as being his partisans. These excesses became so revolting, that Washington, to whom they caused infinite pain, was constrained, in order to put a stop to them, to issue a proclamation denouncing the most rigorous penalties against the perpetrators of such enormities.

At this epoch, the loyalists manifested a spirit of revolt in the counties of Somerset and Worcester, in Maryland, and in that of Sussex, in the state of Delaware; as also in the neighborhood of Albany, and in the country of the Mohawks. Troops were sent to these places, in order to overawe the disaffected; the Congress ordered that suspected persons should be arrested and detained in secure places.

About the same time, general Heath, who guarded the high-lands of New York, summoned Fort Independence, situated in the vicinity of Kingsbridge. But the commander of the garrison answered with intrepidity, and prepared himself for a vigorous resistance. The Americans despairing of success by assault, abandoned the enterprise, and returned to their high and inaccessible positions.

General Howe not making any movement at the commencement of the year, indicative of an intention to enter the field very shortly, Washington resolved to avail himself of this interval of repose to deliver his army from the smallpox, a scourge so formidable in these climates. It had made such terrible ravages the preceding year in the army of the north, that but for the obstacles the English had encountered upon the lakes, nothing would have prevented them from penetrating to the Hudson. The army of the middle was threatened with a similar calamity. Washington therefore judged it necessary to subject all his troops, as well as the militia that joined him from different parts, to a general inoculation. The affair was conducted with so much prudence in the camp that no occasion was offered the enemy to disturb its tranquillity. The physicians of the hospital of Philadelphia were ordered at the same time, to inoculate all the soldiers who traversed that city, on their way to join the army. The same precautions were taken in the other military stations, and thus the army was totally exempted from an evil, which might have clashed with the success of the ensuing campaign. The example of the soldiery proved a signal benefit to the entire population; the salutary practice of inoculation soon became general; and, by little and little, this fatal malady disappeared entirely.

Meanwhile, the month of March was near its conclusion, and the defect of tents and other camp equipage which general Howe expected from England, had not yet permitted him to open the campaign. He resolved, nevertheless, to attempt some expedition, which might occasion a sensible prejudice to the enemy. The Americans during the winter, had formed immense magazines of provisions, forage, and stores of all sorts, in that rough and mountainous tract called Courtland Manor. The great natural strength of the country, the vicinity of the Hudson river, with its convenience in respect to the seat of war, had induced the American generals to make choice of these heights for their general repository. A little town called Peek's Kill, which lies about fifty miles up the river from New York, served as a kind of port to this natural citadel, by which it both received provisions, and dispensed supplies. As a general attempt upon Courtland Manor presented insurmountable difficulties, not only from the strength of the country and impracticability of the ground, but from the force of the corps that were stationed in that quarter, the English general confined his views to an attack upon Peek's Kill. His troops were sent on board transports up the river for this service; the Americans, upon the approach of the British armament, finding themselves unequal to the defence of the place, and that there was no possible time to evacuate the magazines, set fire to them, and retired. The English landed without delay. The damage was considerable; but not so great as general Howe had been led to expect, though greater than the Americans would acknowledge. The English a few days after undertook a similar expedition, upon the borders of Connecticut. The Americans had deposited large quantities of stores and provisions in the town or village of Danbury, in the county of Fairfield. The charge of this enterprise was committed to general Tryon; who, besides the destruction of these stores, had flattered himself with finding a junction of many loyalists in that quarter, as soon as he should appear with the troops of the king. He appeared not to doubt it, in consequence of the confidence he placed in the assertions of the refugees; always prompt to believe what they strongly desire. The twenty-fifth of April, a detachment of two thousand men, having passed through the sound, landed after sun-set upon the coast of Connecticut, between Fairfield and Norwalk. They advanced without interruption, and arrived at Danbury the following day. Colonel Huntingdon, who occupied this place with a feeble garrison, retired at the approach of the enemy, to a stronger position in the rear. As the English could procure no carriages, to bring off the stores and provisions, they immediately proceeded to the destruction of the magazine. The loss was serious to the American army, and particularly in the article of several hundred tents, of which it had great need, and which were the more regretted as the materials were wanting to replace them. The loyalists made not the least movement.

Meanwhile, the whole country was in agitation. The militia, eager to manifest their devotion to the republic, had assembled at Reading under the banners of Congress. Arnold, who happened to be in the vicinity, engaged in the business of recruiting, at the sound of arms, always so grateful to his ear, had hastened to join the companies at Reading. General Wooster, who from the immediate service of Congress had passed into that of the state of Connecticut, as brigadier-general of militia, arrived from another quarter, with considerable reinforcements. All these troops were impatient to engage the enemy. The English, perceiving their danger, retreated with great precipitation, by the way of Ridgefield. The Americans endeavored by every possible means to interrupt their march, until a greater force could arrive to support them with effect in the design of cutting off their retreat. General Wooster lunged upon the rear of the British, and using every advantage of ground, harassed them exceedingly, notwithstanding they had large covering parties, well furnished with field pieces, both on their flanks and rear. In one of these skirmishes, Wooster, at an age approaching closely to seventy, and in the active exertion of a valor which savored more of youthful temerity than of the temperance and discretion of that time of life, was mortally wounded, and being carried out of the field, died shortly after, with the same resolution that he had lived. Filled with consternation at the loss of their commander, his soldiers immediately dispersed. But in the meantime, Arnold had got possession of Ridgefield, where he had already thrown up some sort of an intrenchment, to cover his front. The English presented themselves, and a hot action ensued, which lasted a considerable time. The English having carried the heights which covered the flanks of the Americans, overwhelmed them with their fire. The latter were immediately thrown into confusion, and notwithstanding the efforts of Arnold to rally them, retired with extreme precipitation to Pangatuck, three miles from Norwalk. Tryon lay that night at Ridgefield, and having set fire to some houses, renewed his march on the morning of the twenty-eighth, towards the Sound. He was again encountered by Arnold, who had assembled fresh troops, with some pieces of artillery. Continual skirmishes took place from the one bank to the other of the river Sagatuck, and a sharp contest at the bridge across this stream. But, finally, the English, superior in number and discipline, surmounted all obstacles, and arrived at the place where their ships waited to receive them; they were unable to embark, however, without new difficulties and other combats.

The Congress decreed that a monument should be erected to Wooster, and testified their satisfaction towards Arnold by the gift of a horse, richly caparisoned.

This expedition, entered upon with so much parade, furnished little indemnity for the expense it had occasioned.



The stores destroyed, with the exception of the tents, were of inconsiderable value ; and the burning of the houses of Danbury and Ridgefield, together with the other brutalities committed by the royal troops, did but increase the fury of the people, and confirm them in resistance. This occasion served also to demonstrate, how vain were the hopes which general Tryon had placed in the loyalists. Not one of them ventured to declare himself in favor of the English ; the inhabitants rose, on the contrary, in all parts to repulse the assailants. It is even probable, that this enterprise of the English gave origin to another, full of audacity, on the part of the Americans. The generals of Connecticut had been informed that a commissary of the British army had formed immense magazines of forage, grain, and other necessaries for the troops, at a little port called *Sagg Harbor*, in Long Island ; it was defended only by a detachment of infantry, and a sloop of twelve guns. The English, however, believed themselves sufficiently protected by their armed vessels which cruised in the Sound ; they could never persuade themselves that the Americans would dare to pass it, and attempt any thing upon Long Island. But the latter were nowise intimidated by the obstacles, and resolved to surprise Sagg Harbor, by a sudden incursion. Accordingly, colonel Meigs, one of the intrepid companions of Arnold in the expedition of Canada, crossed the Sound with as much rapidity as ability, and arrived before day at the place where the magazines were situated. Notwithstanding the resistance of the garrison and the crews of the vessels, he burned a dozen brigs and sloops which lay at the wharf, and entirely destroyed every thing on shore. Having accomplished the object of the expedition, he returned without loss to Guilford, in Connecticut, bringing with him many prisoners. The Americans manifested, in this enterprise, the greatest humanity ; they abstained from the pillage of private property, and even permitted the prisoners to retain their effects.

The winter had completely elapsed in the midst of these operations, and the season approached in which the armies were about to take the field anew. No one doubted that the English would exert their utmost endeavors to terminate the war in the present year. A formidable corps was prepared to attack the American provinces on the side of Canada, and a still more numerous army menaced those of the middle. All minds were suspended with the expectation of approaching events.

If the English generals could have commenced the campaign as soon as the season for action was arrived, it is certain, they might have obtained the most important advantages. When the spring opened, the army of Washington was still extremely feeble. If a part of those whose term of service was expired, had been induced to remain from a consideration of the weakness of the army, and the ruin which must attend their departure before it was reenforced, the

greater number, unable to endure the severity of winter in the fields, had returned home. In the meantime, the business of recruiting under an engagement to serve during the war, or even for three years, went on but slowly, notwithstanding the promised advantages; the genius and habits of the people being averse to all subjection. The making of draughts from the militia, which was the final resource, was considered as a dangerous innovation.

As a further check upon the increase of the force in New Jersey, the New England provinces, which abounded with men of a warlike spirit, were taken up with their domestic concerns, fearing for Ticonderoga, the river Hudson, and even for Boston itself. A multitude of American privateers had gone into that port with their prizes, and the English retained all their ancient hatred against the inhabitants. The British troops cantoned in Rhode Island, afforded continual room for apprehension; they might attack Massachusetts in flank, and make inroads with impunity into the neighboring provinces. Such, in effect, was the difficulty of raising men, that in some of the provinces the enlisting of apprentices and Irish indentured servants was permitted, contrary to the former resolutions and decrees, with a promise of indemnification to their masters. The winter and spring had been employed in these preparations, but towards the latter end of May, the mild weather having commenced, the Americans took arms with promptitude, and Washington found himself daily reinforced from all quarters. The English thus lost the occasion of an easy victory; perhaps, as some have written, by the delay of tents. However this may have been, they deferred taking the field till obstacles were multiplied around them.

Washington, unable as yet to penetrate the designs of general Howe, sought with vigilance to observe the direction he was about to give to his arms. It was apprehended that renewing the war in New Jersey he would endeavor to penetrate to the Delaware; and, passing the river by means of a bridge, known to be constructed for the purpose, make himself master of Philadelphia. It was conjectured also, and this was the expectation of Washington, that the English general would proceed up the Hudson river into the upper parts of the province of New York, in order to cooperate with the British army of Canada, which was at the same time to attack the fortress of Ticonderoga, and after its reduction, to operate a junction with general Howe in the vicinity of Albany. This movement of the enemy was the more to be apprehended, as besides the advantages it promised, it was known to have been prescribed by the instructions of the British ministers. General Howe had been diverted from following them by the successes he had obtained in New Jersey, and the hope he had conceived of being able, of himself, to bring the war to a successful conclusion.

In so great an uncertainty in respect to the future operations of the enemy, Washington, having received his reinforcements, determined to take such positions as should be equally proper to oppose them, whether the English should move towards Albany, or should resolve to march against Philadelphia, by way of New Jersey. According to this plan, the troops raised in the northern provinces, were stationed partly at Ticonderoga, and partly at Peek's Kill, those of the middle and southern provinces, as far as North Carolina, occupied New Jersey, leaving a few corps for the protection of the more western provinces.

In this manner, if general Howe moved against Philadelphia, he found in front all the forces assembled in New Jersey, and in addition, those encamped at Peek's Kill, who would have descended to harass his right flank. If, on the other hand, he took the direction of Albany, the corps of Peek's Kill defended the passages in front, while his left flank might also be attacked by the troops of New Jersey, upon the banks of the Hudson. If, on the contrary, the English army of Canada came by way of the sea, to join that of general Howe upon the shores of New Jersey, the troops of Peek's Kill could immediately unite with those that occupied the same province, and thus compose a formidable army for the defence of Philadelphia. If, finally, the army of Canada attacked Ticonderoga, the camp of Peek's Kill might carry succours to those who were charged with the defence of that fortress. But as it was of inexpressible importance to preserve Philadelphia in the power of the United States, the Congress ordained the formation of a camp upon the western bank of the Delaware, with the double object of receiving all the troops that arrived from the south and west, and of serving, in case of need, as a reserve. Here also were to assemble all the recruits of Pennsylvania, reenforced by several regiments of regular troops. This army was placed under the command of general Arnold, who was then at Philadelphia. All these arrangements being made, on the twenty-eighth of May, Washington quitted his former position in the neighborhood of Morristown, and advancing within a few miles of Brunswick, upon the left bank of the Rariton, took possession of the strong country along Middlebrook. He turned this advantageous situation to every account of which it was capable; his camp, winding along the course of the hills, was strongly intrenched and covered with artillery; nor was it better secured by its immediate natural or artificial advantages, than by the difficulties of approach which the ground in front threw in the way of an enemy. In this situation he commanded a view of the British encampment on the hills of Brunswick, and of most of the intermediate country towards that place and Amboy. The American army, at this epoch, amounted to fifteen thousand men, inclusive of the North Carolinians, and the militia of New Jersey; but this number



comprehended many apprentices, and some totally undisciplined companies.

Always controlled by a sort of fatal necessity, which was the manifest cause of all the reverses of his party, general Howe would never ascend the river Hudson towards Canada to cooperate and join with the northern British army. He persisted in his favorite object of invading New Jersey and Pennsylvania, according to the design he had conceived of penetrating through the first of these provinces to the Delaware, driving Washington before him, and reducing the whole country to so effectual a state of subjection as to establish a safe and open communication between the army and New York.

He presumed, either that Washington would hazard a battle, and in that case he entertained no doubt of success; or that the Americans would constantly retire, which appeared to him the most probable. In the latter case, having by the reduction of New Jersey, left every thing safe in his rear, and secured the passage of the Delaware; he became, of course, master of Philadelphia, which from its situation, was incapable of any effectual defence, and could only be protected by Washington at the certain expense and hazard of a battle; than which nothing was more coveted by the English.

If the obstacles in New Jersey were found so great that they could not be overcome without much loss of time and expense of blood, his intention was to profit of the powerful naval force, and the great number of transports and vessels of all sorts which lay at New York. By means of this numerous marine, the army might be conveyed either to the mouths of the Delaware and thence to Philadelphia, or into the bay of Chesapeake, which opened the way into the heart of the central provinces, and led either directly, or by crossing a country of no great extent to the possession of that city. That point gained, Philadelphia was to become the place of arms and centre of action, whilst every part of the hostile provinces of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland would, from their deep bays and navigable rivers, be exposed to the continual attacks of an enemy so powerful by sea. But it is evident that the first object of the views of the English general, was the destruction of the army of Washington, and therefore before resorting to the aid of his marine, he resolved to make trial of fortune in New Jersey, by using all the resources of art to force the enemy to an action. Accordingly, having received from Europe his tents, and other field equipage, with some reinforcements composed principally of German troops, he passed over to the frontiers of New Jersey, and moved with his whole army to Brunswick, having left however a sufficient garrison at Amboy. When he had accurately examined the strength of the posts which Washington occupied, he renounced the scheme of assaulting him in his camp. He continued for several days in front of his lines, offering him battle; but the American general refusing it, he pushed on detachments,

and made movements as if he intended to pass him, and advanced to the Delaware, hoping that his enemy, alarmed for the safety of Philadelphia, would have abandoned this impregnable post to follow him. But Washington, firm in his resolution of never committing the fortune of America to the hazard of a single action, made no movement.

Meanwhile, having observed by the demonstrations of the English, that their design was to prosecute their operations, not against the passages leading to Canada, but in the province of New Jersey, he ordered the troops at Peek's Kill to march to his succour. He gave colonel Morgan, the same who had displayed so brilliant a valor at the assault of Quebec, the command of a troop of light horse, destined to annoy the left flank of the English army, and to repress, or cut off its advanced parties. General Sullivan, who occupied Princeton with a strong detachment, was ordered to fall back to a more secure position, upon the heights of Rocky Hill. But general Howe, perceiving that Washington was not to be enticed by these demonstrations to quit his fastnesses, resolved to put himself in motion, and to approach nearer to the Delaware. Accordingly, in the night of the fourteenth of June, the entire British army, with the exception of two thousand soldiers, who remained for the protection of Brunswick, began to move, in two columns, towards the river. The van of the first, conducted by lord Cornwallis, and which had taken the road to the right, arrived by break of day at Somerset Court House, nine miles distant from New Brunswick, having passed without obstacle the little river Millstone. The column of the left, under general Heister, reached at the same time the village of Middlebush, situated lower down upon the road of Princeton. But Washington, faithful to his temporising plan, had too much penetration to be diverted from it by circumvention or sleight. He reflected, that without supposing in the enemy a temerity, which was absolutely foreign to the prudent and circumspect character of general Howe, it could not be imagined that he would venture to advance upon the Delaware, and to cross that river, having to combat an army on the opposite bank, and another, still more formidable, in his rear. It was, besides, evident that if the real intention of the English had hitherto been to pass the Delaware, they would have marched rapidly towards it, without halting, as they had done, at half way. He was not ignorant, moreover, that they had advanced light to this point, leaving at Brunswick their baggage, batteaux, and bridge equipage. Having well pondered these circumstances, Washington concluded that the project of the enemy was not to proceed to the Delaware, but to allure him from his camp of Middlebrook, in order to reduce him to the necessity of fighting. Wherefore he made no movement, but continued to remain quietly within his intrenchments. Only, as the enemy was so near, he drew up his army in order of battle, upon the

heights which defended the front of his camp, and kept it all the following night under arms.

Meanwhile, the militia of New Jersey assembled from every quarter, with great alacrity; and general Sullivan with his detachment marching upon the left bank of the Millstone, had approached the Rariton, so as to be able to disquiet the enemy by frequent skirmishes in front, and to join, if necessary, with the commander-in-chief.

General Howe having ascertained that his adversary was too wary to be caught in the snares that he had hitherto laid for him, and that his menaces to pass the Delaware would be fruitless, resolved next to try whether the appearance of fear, and a precipitate retreat towards Amboy, might not have the effect of drawing him into the plain, and consequently, of forcing him to an engagement. According to this new plan, in the night of the nineteenth, he suddenly quitted his position in front of the enemy, where he had begun to intrench himself; he retired in haste to Brunswick, and thence, with the same marks of precipitation, towards Amboy. The English, as they retreated, burned a great number of houses, either from personal rage, or with a view to inflame the passions of the Americans, and increase the ardor of their pursuit. When they had gained Amboy, they threw the bridge, which was intended for the Delaware, over the channel which separates the continent from Staten Island, and immediately passed over it their heavy baggage, and all the incumbrances of the army. Some of the troops followed, and every thing was in immediate preparation for the passage of the rest of the army, as if all hope had been lost of its making any further progress in New Jersey. Washington, with all his caution and penetration, allowed himself to be imposed upon by this stratagem of his adversary. He ordered generals Greene, Sullivan, and Maxwell, to pursue the enemy with strong detachments; but the two latter were not in season. Colonel Morgan infested the rear of the retreating army with his cavalry; and lord Sterling, with colonel Conway, harassed its left flank. The advantages they gained, however, were trifling, as the English marched in good order, and had taken care to place a great part of their forces in the rear guard. Finally, Washington himself, to be more at hand for the protection and support of his advanced parties, descended from the impregnable heights of Middlebrook, and advanced to a place called Quibbletown, six or seven miles nearer to Amboy.

Lord Sterling, with a strong division, occupied the village of Mettuckin, lower down towards that city.

General Howe lost no time in endeavoring to profit of the occasion he had opened for himself so shrewdly. In the night of the twenty-fifth of June, he drew back his troops from Staten Island to the continent, and on the morning of the twenty-sixth, marched them with great expedition against the Americans. His army formed two distinct divisions. He had three objects in view. To cut off some of



the principal advanced parties of the enemy ; to bring his main body to an engagement ; and finally, by a rapid movement upon his left, to seize the defiles of the mountains which led to the encampment of Middlebrook, in order to prevent Washington from resuming that strong position. The column of the right, commanded by lord Cornwallis, was destined to accomplish this last operation ; accordingly it moved with extreme celerity, by the way of Woodbridge, to the Scotch Plains. The left, under the immediate orders of general Howe, took the route of Metuckin. It was the intention of the English generals, that these two corps should reunite beyond the village of Metuckin, upon the road leading from that place to the Scotch Plains, and that thence, having separated anew, the left should rapidly turn against the left flank of the American army, posted at Quibbletown, while the right should endeavor to occupy the hills situated upon the left of the camp of Middlebrook. Four battalions with six pieces of artillery, remained at Bonhampton to secure Amboy against any unforeseen attack.

According to these dispositions, the English army advanced with a rapid step, sanguine in the hope of victory. But fortune, who was pleased to reserve the Americans for a better destiny, all at once deranged the well concerted scheme of the British generals. Lord Cornwallis having passed Woodbridge, fell in with a party of seven hundred American riflemen. A warm skirmish ensued, which soon terminated in the flight of the republicans. But the noise of the musketry, and afterwards the fugitives themselves gave Washington warning of the extreme danger that menaced him. His resolution was immediately taken to recover with celerity what he had abandoned, perhaps, with imprudence. He quitted accordingly his position at Quibbletown, and with all possible expedition repossessed himself of the encampment of Middlebrook. When arrived, he instantly detached a strong corps to secure those passes in the mountains upon his left, through which he perceived it was the intention of lord Cornwallis to approach the heights. This general having dispersed without difficulty the smaller advanced parties of the enemy, fell in at length with lord Sterling, who, with about three thousand men, strongly posted in a woody country, and well covered by artillery judiciously disposed, manifested a determination to dispute his passage. But the English and Hessians, animated by a mutual emulation, attacked with such impetuosity, that the Americans, unable to withstand the shock, were soon routed on all sides, having sustained besides no inconsiderable loss in men, that of three pieces of brass ordnance. The English continued their pursuit as far as Westfield, but the woods and the intense heat of the weather, prevented its effect. Lord Cornwallis having discovered that the defiles were diligently guarded, and despairing of being able to accomplish his design, returned by the road of Raway, to Amboy. General Howe

in like manner, finding his plan entirely defeated by the sudden retreat of Washington into his strong camp of Middlebrook, also marched back to that city. The brigades of Scott and Conway followed the English step by step as far as the frontiers, but without finding an opening to attack them, so close and cautious was their order of march.

The British generals now reflected that the continuation of hostilities in New Jersey, with a view of penetrating to the Delaware, would not only be fruitless, since the enemy was evidently resolved not to hazard a general engagement, but that it would even be attended with extreme danger, as well from the strength of his positions as from the general enmity of the inhabitants. In effect, the season was already advanced, and there was no more time to be wasted in unprofitable expeditions. They resolved therefore to attack Pennsylvania by way of the sea; thus persevering in their scheme of acting by themselves, and not in conjunction with the Canadian army, which it was known had invested Ticonderoga; and which probably would soon be, if it was not already, in possession of that fortress. Accordingly all the troops of general Howe were passed over the channel to Staten Island, and the Americans soon after entered Amboy. The great preparations made by the English in Staten Island, and in all the province of New York, for the embarkation of the army, and the uncertainty of the place against which the storm would be directed, excited a general alarm throughout the continent. Boston, the Hudson river, the Delaware, Chesapeake bay, and even Charleston, in Carolina, were alternately held to be the objects of the expedition. General Washington exerted the utmost vigilance; he maintained a secret correspondence with the republicans in New York, who advised him daily of whatever they saw and heard. In pursuance of this intelligence, he was continually despatching expresses to put those places upon their guard, which, from immediate information, he supposed for the time to be the threatened point. But herein the English had greatly the advantage, for having the sea always open, they could fall unawares upon the destined place, before the inhabitants could be prepared to resist them, and before the soldiery could possibly come to their succour. But among all the objects that general Howe might have in view, the Americans knew very well, that the two which he must consider of most importance, were consequently the most probable. These were evidently either the conquest of Philadelphia, or the cooperation, by the Hudson river, with the army of Canada. But to which of these two operations he would give the preference, it was not easy to penetrate. In this perplexity, Washington continued stationary in his encampment at Middlebrook, where he could securely persist in his defensive system, and be equally near at hand to march to the succour of Philadelphia, or to ascend the Hudson.

In this posture of things, a movement of general Howe led him to believe that the English had in view the expedition of Albany. Their fleet, moored at Princesbay, a place not far from Amboy, moved higher up towards New York, and came to anchor at Wateringplace, while their whole army, with its munitions and baggage, withdrew from the coast opposite Amboy, and took post at the north point of Staten Island. Washington, thereupon, having posted two regiments of infantry and one of light horse between Newark and Amboy, to cover this part against desultory incursions, moved with the main body of his army to reoccupy his old camp of Morristown. He there found himself nearer to the Hudson, without being at such a distance from Middlebrook, as to prevent him from promptly resuming that position, if the enemy made any demonstration against New Jersey. He, moreover, detached general Sullivan with a numerous corps to occupy Prompton, upon the road to Peek's Kill, in order that he might, according to circumstances, either advance to the latter place, or return to Morristown.

In the meantime, it was confidently reported that general Burgoyne, who commanded the British army upon the lakes, had appeared in great force under the walls of Ticonderoga. Washington, therefore, still more persuaded of the intended cooperation of the two armies, under Howe and Burgoyne, upon the banks of the Hudson, ordered general Sullivan to advance immediately and post himself in front of Peek's Kill, while he proceeded himself as far as Prompton, and afterwards to Clove. The news soon arrived of the surrender of Ticonderoga, and at the same time, intelligence was received that the English fleet was anchored under New York, and even that a great number of transports were come up the Hudson as far as Dobbs Ferry, where the river widens so as to form a species of lake, called Tappan Bay. These different movements confirmed Washington in his conjectures respecting the project of the enemy; he therefore directed general Sullivan to pass the Hudson, and to intrench himself behind Peek's Kill upon the left bank. In like manner, lord Sterling was ordered to cross the river and unite with general Putnam, who guarded the heights that were the object of so much jealousy for the two armies. But, as the larger ships, and a part of the light vessels, were returned from Wateringplace to Sandy Hook, as if the fleet was preparing for sea, in order to gain the Delaware, and as the whole British army still remained in Staten Island, Washington began to suspect that general Howe meditated embarking with a view to the conquest of Philadelphia.

In the midst of these uncertainties, and while the American general endeavored to penetrate the intentions of the English, and the latter to deceive him by vain demonstrations upon the banks of the Hudson, the news arrived of an adventure which, though of little importance in itself, produced as much exultation to the Americans as regret to



the English. The British troops stationed in Rhode Island were commanded by general Prescott, who, finding himself in an island surrounded by the fleet of the king, and disposing of a force greatly superior to what the enemy could assemble in this quarter, became extremely negligent of his guard. The Americans, earnestly desiring to retaliate the capture of general Lee, formed the design of surprising general Prescott in his quarters, and of bringing him off prisoner to the continent. Accordingly, in the night of the tenth of July, lieutenant-colonel Barton, at the head of a party of forty of the country militia, well acquainted with the places, embarked in whale boats, and after having rowed a distance of above ten miles, and avoided with great dexterity the numerous vessels of the enemy, landed upon the western coast of Rhode Island, between Newport and Bristol Ferry. He repaired immediately, with the utmost silence and celerity, to the lodging of general Prescott. They adroitly secured the sentinels who guarded the door. An aid-de-camp went up into the chamber of the general, who slept quietly, and arrested him, without giving him time even to put on his clothes; they conducted him with equal secrecy and success to the main land. This event afforded the Americans singular satisfaction, as they hoped to exchange their prisoner for general Lee. It was, however, particularly galling to general Prescott, who not long before had been delivered by exchange from the hands of the Americans, after having been taken in the expedition of Canada. In addition to this, he had lately been guilty of an action unworthy of a man of honor, in setting a price upon the head of general Arnold, as if he had been a common outlaw and assassin; an insult which Arnold immediately returned, by setting an inferior price upon the person of Prescott. The Congress publicly thanked lieutenant-colonel Barton, and presented him with a sword.

Meanwhile, the immensity of the preparations made by general Howe for fitting out the fleet, as well as several movements it executed, strengthened the suspicion of Washington that the demonstrations of the English upon the Hudson were no other than a mere feint. Every day he was more and more convinced that their real plan was to embark and proceed to the attack of Philadelphia, as the capital of the confederation. He therefore retired progressively from Clove, and divided his army into several corps, in order to be able to succour the places attacked with the more expedition. He prayed the Congress to assemble the militia of Pennsylvania, without loss of time, at Chester, and those of the lower counties of Delaware, at Wilmington. He directed watches to be stationed upon the capes of the Delaware, to keep a look out, and give early notice of the arrival of the enemy. The governor of New Jersey was exhorted to call out the militia of the districts bordering upon this river, directing them to make head at Gloucester, situated upon the left bank, a little below Philadelphia.

Notwithstanding all the diligence of the brothers Howe, in preparing for the embarkation, and the assistance afforded by the crews of more than three hundred vessels, the English could not procure, without extreme difficulty, the articles that were necessary, so that it was not until the twenty-third of July that the fleet and army were able to depart from Sandy Hook. The force that embarked upon this enterprise, consisted of thirty-six British and Hessian battalions, including the light infantry and grenadiers, with a powerful artillery, a New York corps, called the Queen's rangers, and a regiment of cavalry. Seventeen battalions, with a regiment of light horse, and the remainder of the new corps of loyalists, were left for the protection of New York and the neighboring islands. Rhode Island was occupied by seven battalions. It was said that general Howe intended to have taken a greater force with him upon this expedition; but that upon the representation of general Clinton, who was to command in his absence, of the danger to which the islands would be exposed, from the extensiveness of the coasts, and the great number of posts that were necessarily to be maintained, he acknowledged the force of these considerations by relanding several regiments.

Thus, England, by the error of her ministers, or of her generals, had in America, instead of a great and powerful army, only three separate corps, from which individually no certain victory could be expected. At this moment, in effect, one of these corps was in Canada, another in the islands of New York and Rhode Island, and the third was on its way by sea, destined to act against Philadelphia. But perhaps it was imagined that in a country like that which furnished the theatre of this war, continually interrupted by lakes, rivers, forests, and inaccessible places, three light armies were likely to operate with more effect separately, than united in a single mass, incumbered by the number of troops, and multitude of baggage. This excuse would, perhaps, be valid, if the English generals, instead of operating as they did, without concert and without a common plan, had mutually assisted each other with their counsels and forces to strike a decisive blow, and arrive together at the same object.

However this may be viewed, the rapid progress of general Burgoyne towards the sources of the Hudson, the apprehension of an approaching attack on the part of general Howe, and the uncertainty of the point it menaced, all concurred to maintain a general agitation and alarm throughout the American continent. Great battles were expected, and no one doubted they would prove as fierce and sanguinary, as they were to be important and decisive.







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